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9 Feb. '96

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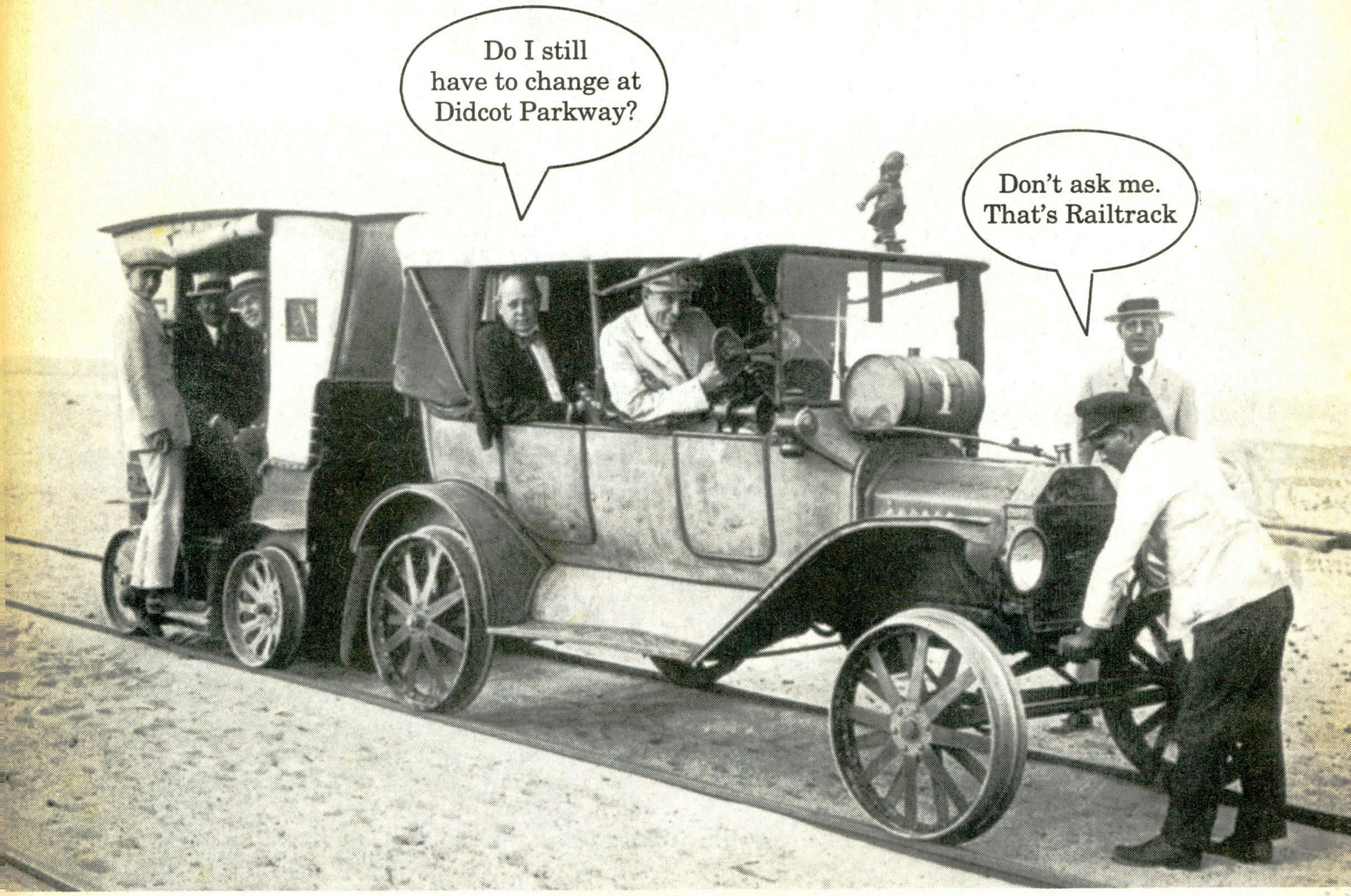

The Eye

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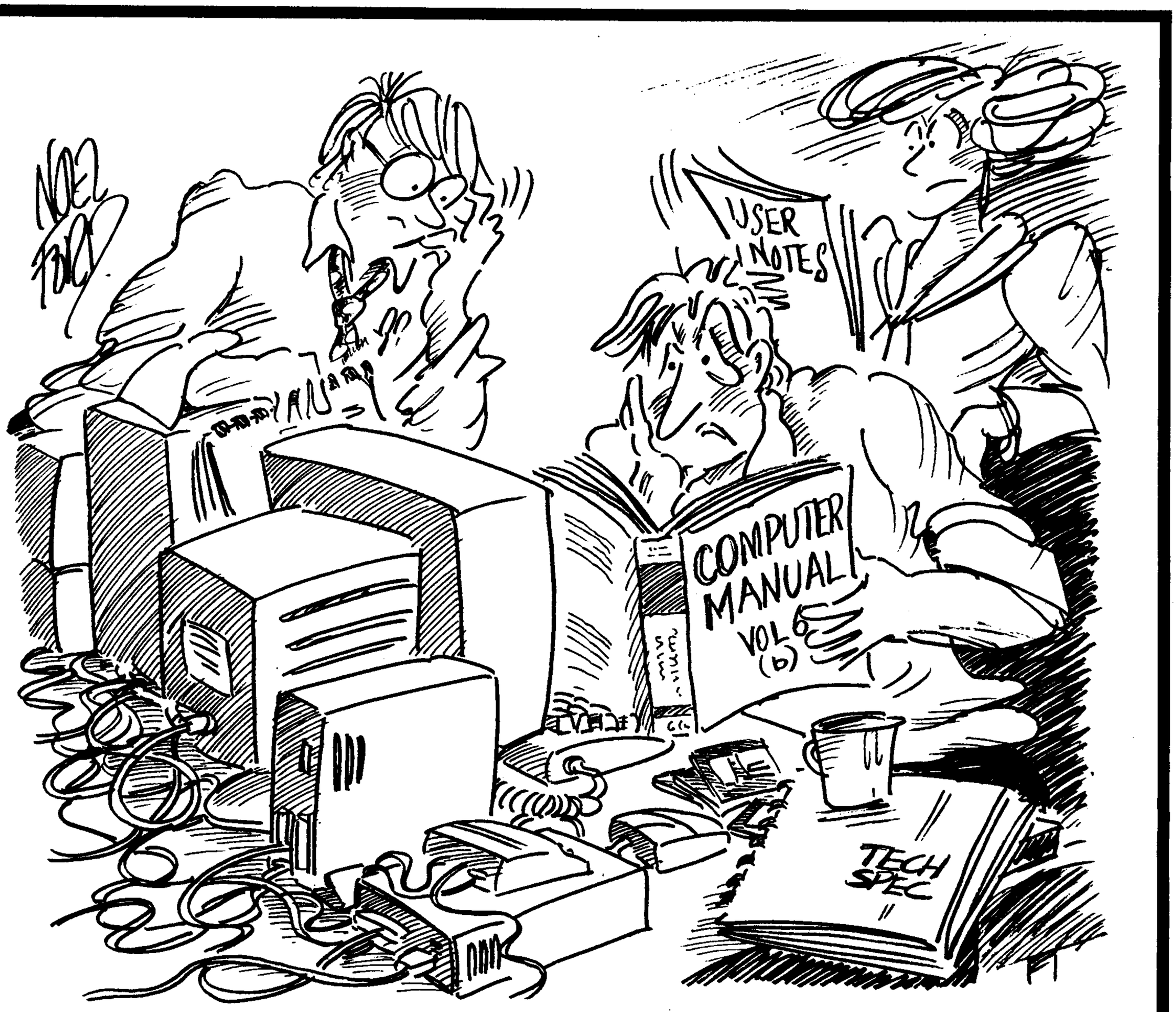

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Gnome

MY friend Mr Michael Heseltine has been under fire in recent days for suggesting that it is legitimate business practice to delay paying creditors until the last possible moment.

The usual ignorant chorus of anti-business snipers has attempted to vilify Mr Heseltine as the enemy of small business and the unacceptable face of capitalism.

Let me put the record straight. Mr Heseltine has struck a blow for all of us involved in the vital national activity of honest free enterprise.

Mr Heseltine's only fault in my book is that he has not gone far enough. Not only does a prudent businessman such as myself *delay* paying bills until threatened with court action — he doesn't pay them at all.

This forces his creditors into bankruptcy which leaves them in no position to pay any lawyers and sue for redress.

We all owe Mr Heseltine a great debt. Which we are not going to pay him.

E. Strobes
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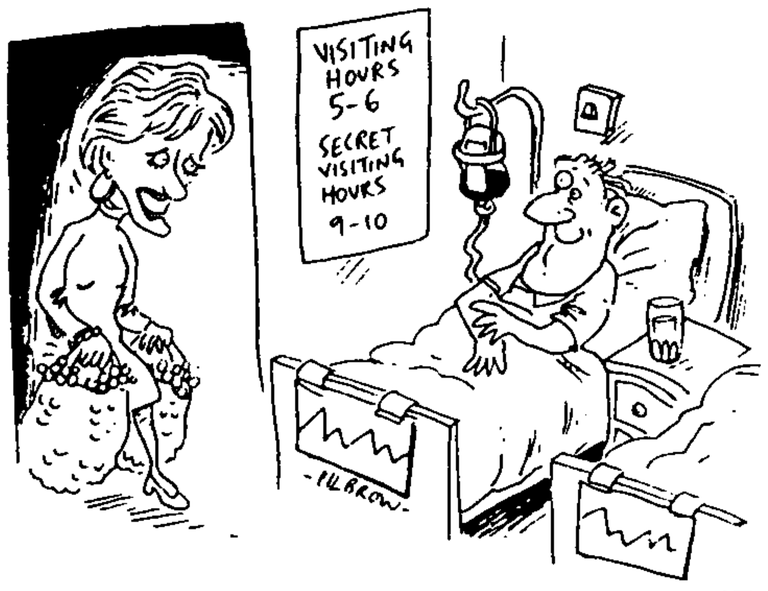
Berks



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COLOUR SECTION

THE SCOTT REPORT

THE Campaign to Rubbish Scott (CARS) got its act together in triumphant harmony on 25 January when Lord Howe, its patron saint, published an article in the *Spectator* and Sir Bernard Ingham chimed in ponderously in the *Daily Express*.

The view of both was that Sir Richard Scott is an "iconoclastic, inquisitorial" pinko busybody, and that everyone at the foreign office, the ministry of defence, the department of trade and above all 10 Downing Street were, in Lord Howe's ringing phrase, "almost sanctimoniously virtuous".

To back this up Howe declares:

1 That his own all-things-to-all-exporters 1985 guidelines on arms exports to Iran and Iraq were not changed in 1988. Problem: why did the foreign office send a senior diplomat, John Goulden, to a Commons committee in January 1992 to say unequivocally that the guidelines *were* changed in 1988?

2 That no licences for the export of lethal goods to Iraq were issued by the British government. Problem i): what about the supergun, which was licensed for export despite the warnings of Tory MP Sir Hal Miller that it was indeed lethal? Problem ii): what about the billion pounds or so worth of arms that went to Iran or Iraq through conduit countries like Jordan? In the 1980s, the decade of the Iran-Iraq war, British arms exports to Jordan were more than half a billion pounds, 3,000 per cent up on the 1970s.

3 That witnesses were denied "the elementary right of being legally represented". Problem i): what about the half a million quid of taxpayers' money dished out to people like Howe for legal representation at the inquiry? Problem ii): why has Howe not denounced the Broadcasting Standards Council which affords no legal representation to the broadcasters it constantly attacks — and is chaired by someone called Lady Howe, wife of the CARS chairman? Problem iii): the 1967 Aberfan inquiry, which Howe constantly holds up as the ideal case of fair legal representation (especially since one of the legal representatives was a young barrister called G. Howe) was a complete whitewash, pinning the blame for the deaths of 120 children on a couple of coal board officials).

4 CARS leaked a draft copy of the Scott report to the *Sunday Times* (4 Feb) in an attempt to spike its guns. The leak has had exactly the opposite effect, especially on the wretched Howe who is denounced in no uncertain terms for sending out a batch of letters to MPs and others indicating that British policy on arms to Iraq did not change when it patently did.

As for Sir Bernard Ingham, does he remember Sir Hal Miller?

After Sir Hal exposed the government lies over supergun, he recalled: "I was told by several lobby correspondents that they had been briefed that I had been duped and bribed. I was asked by one of them to confirm that I had been seen in a hotel in Brussels with Iraqis and an export licence application waiting to go through. I told him I was happy to confirm anything put out by the government disinformation services but there were three slight problems. I haven't been to Brussels for 40 years. I have never met an Iraqi. I have never made out an export licence application." (*Daily Mirror*, 25 January 1991).

Sir Hal said he'd later traced these smears to the press office of the then prime minister, Margaret Thatcher (prop: Sir Bernard Ingham).

WELSH Water's takeover of South Wales Electricity (Swalec) on 1 February got off to an ignominious start.

The new company that runs the two merged businesses is called Hydor plc, and just as its shaven-headed chief executive Graham Hawker was going on radio to announce the news, taps in Brecon — where Hydor has its HQ — ran dry, as did the taps in the villages of Deri and Fochriw.

The reason? An electricity power cut… which turned off the pumps… which control the water supply. Or not. Interestingly, *hydor* is Welsh for "confidence".

Welsh Water will also have been disappointed by the news that industry regulator Ian Byatt is to extend his tenure at Ofwat by another two years. The company has clashed fiercely with him over his demands that it and Swalec should retain distinct stock market listings to ringfence the water company's resources. Welsh Water's chief executive is furious and intends to tell the regulator that shareholders and customers will lose out if the two companies cannot be fully merged.

Cynics may feel the utility's fury is not unconnected to the £43 million of tax credits it has built up because of investments in sewage treatment. The credits are sitting on the water company's balance sheets, but a full merger with the electricity company would create opportunities for creative accounting to redistribute the tax pennies — for the benefit of both shareholders and customers, of course.

THE amazing good fortune enjoyed by Kent police officers in speeding cars continues.

Eye readers will recall the recent case of PC Paling, who was unconditionally discharged by Hemel Hempstead magistrates even though he admitted driving at 110mph down the M1. PC Paling explained that his passenger, a Mr David Phillips, the chief constable of Kent, had told him to "put his foot down" (*Eye* 888).

Now Ashford magistrates have been judging the case of chief inspector Archie Houston of Kent police, who was photographed by one of his own force's speedmeters driving at 92mph down the M20 last August.

Mr Houston told the magistrates he must have been chasing a speeding motorist: "The only reason I would exceed the speed limit would be if I thought another vehicle was exceeding the limit." He could not recollect stopping or advising or checking any other motorist, but he asked the magistrates to accept "the balance of probabilities". They did so at once.

Bench chairman Kenneth West said: "We have decided there is a special reason for not endorsing your licence." Mr Houston was given an absolute discharge.

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Former squatters run out of pit latrines

Harare Herald

Street of Shame

MIRROR Group's killer bimbo md Amanda Platell had an awesome task in January: to produce an internal marketing report on how the *Independent* had improved since Charlie "Gorbals" Wilson became acting editor.

A couple of pages of her 20-page epic were devoted to the "life blood" of the *Dependant*, its reporters. Platell presented a long list of the paper's best journalistic assets, revealing her interest in the broadsheet: she got nearly every name she listed wrong.

With a skill that would shame a weekly freesheet trainee on day one, either the hacks' surnames or christian names were muddled. The most feted entry was completely unknown: Platell noted with delight the editorial presence of Bob Fisher, columnist of the year. After an inquiry it was discovered that Platell actually meant Robert Fisk, the paper's very distinguished foreign correspondent.

This was the final straw for the marketing department. It had the report withdrawn and pulped.

ANDY COULSON's Bizarre hotline in the *Sun* to Manchester popsters Oasis (*Eye* 887) continues to burn with imaginative stories.

After we revealed how he had featured the Gallagher brothers no fewer than 132 times in 18 months, Coulson actually *stepped up* his hyping of the band.

On 16 January he told readers that Liam Gallagher had once lost a job as a car valet for throwing a bucket of water over Manchester United's Ryan Giggs. Apparently Liam had shouted at Giggs: "Oi, red nose" before soaking him.

Those with long memories may recall that on 2 January 1995 Coulson told a similar story. Only that time he wrote that Liam had lost the job for wrecking Eric Cantona's car, the Ryan Giggs version having entirely escaped the newshound Coulson.

ANNA FORD's recent diary in the *Spectator* caused a lot of controversy: not for its striking content but because it featured a cartoon drawn by her daughter, Claire Boxer.

The 12 year old's drawing was unremarkable except for the fact that she is the great cartoonist Marc's daughter. *Spectator* editor Frank Johnson was very taken with young Claire, and told his cartoon editor Michael Heath that he wanted to give her drawings, which uncannily resemble her father's, some editorial space.Reams of faxes followed this suggestion, including one purporting to come from Nigel Lawson, who enclosed a fetching stick figure cartoon by his "very talented" young son Dominic.Equally good-humoured were the cartoonists who scrape by on the highly successful magazine's pathetic payments. They wrote asking the editor if their children could write book reviews to be published alongside their cartoons on the same principle. Since then Johnson seems to have lost enthusiasm for his young protégée's work.

Sadly the same is not true of Petronella Wyatt, who he hired as a columnist to alternate with Auberon Waugh in the magazine's prominent "Another Voice" slot.Johnson has no quarrel with her laughably inane sixth-form essays, but he has been told that they might suffer by comparison with Waugh.So he decided to give la Wyatt her own dedicated column in a less prominent position in the magazine, just before the books and arts section. But what to call it? He consulted his team during an editorial meeting at the *Spectator*. Virginia Utley mischievously suggested that it might be called "Pet's Corner".

NEW *Express* editor Richard Addiss continues to throw Lord Stevens' money around with abandon.

So desperate was he for some reason to lure *Mail* showbiz hack Lester Middlehurst that in addition to a salary of £90,000 he ordered travel editor Jeremy Gates to wangle a freebie to the Caribbean for two, whence Middlehurst and companion will depart as soon as he is free of the *Mail* shackles.

THE *Express*'s Mr Toad, Paul Callan, launched a vitriolic attack on Labour attitudes to education recently: "Private education, privilege, the hint of upper class-Charlies, boats at posh public schools... oh dear, all those dreadful aspects of envy that tend to tear the Labour party apart from time to time."

This could not possibly be the same envy-racked Paul Callan who so famously tried to pass himself off as an old boy of Eton, could it?

DANIEL JOHNSON, who has moved from his post as the *Times* books editor to edit the op-ed page, is perhaps best known for his ponderous monologues during leader conferences and his strong attachment to Thatch (he burst into tears when she resigned).

On books, the staunchly Catholic son of Paul Johnson had fallen prey to the charms of authoress Rachel Cusk and had asked her to write numerous reviews for him. So it was no surprise for *Times* hacks to find the charming Miss Cusk featuring at length on Johnson's new op-ed pages.

"*DOCTOR Who* is to be resurrected one more time for a feature film starring one of the McGann brothers," Jo Brand noted in her weekly Independent column on 20 January.

This should not be confused with her weekly page in the *Daily Mirror*, where on 24 January she observed that "*Doctor Who* is to be resurrected one more time for a feature film starring one of the McGann brothers..." Altogether, that day's column from the *Mirror* included no fewer than five items she had copied out, verbatim, from her *Independent* jottings four days earlier.

As a right-on comedian, Brand is naturally in favour of recycling. But one wonders whether Piers Morgan — who is paying her £1,000 a time for her *Mirror* column — feels he's getting his money's worth.

THE world's worst columnist, Peter McHackey of the London *Evening Standard*, was outraged by misunderstandings over his relationship with his secretary, Caroline "Airhead" Aherne (see last *Eye*).

Unfortunately, just as he was explaining the true situation to fascinated colleagues, a fax came clattering through on the wrong machine, from a hotel in Brussels: "Dear Peter, how delightful to meet you and Caroline the other day..."

McKay now finds himself in a tricky "club sandwich" at Associated Newspapers' Kensington HQ. Ms Aherne, naturally, is nearby in the *Standard* editorial department. Above, on floor three, Peter's steely wife Carla has begun a part-time job in the literary department of the *Mail on Sunday*. On the fourth floor, working in an administrative capacity, is McHackey's feisty first wife, Helen.

As if that weren't enough, Carla McHackey has also been hired to write a column for the new soaraway *Daily Telegraph*. "Being a mother is sad," she announced last Friday. "Here I am somewhere in windswept, sodden Oxfordshire with a husband who works in London all week... 'What are you exactly for?' my husband will sometimes ask irritably at weekends." Years of domesticity, she explained, haven't done much for her self-esteem: "Nor, I might add, does my husband, who on the occasions we overlap tends to introduce me as 'my present wife'."

As McHackey himself would say: isn't life grand?

TRENDIER-than-thou listings magazine *Time Out* has launched an advertising campaign for "sexy and intelligent" readers — people clearly who are nothing like *TO*'s managing director Mike "Heffalump" Hardwick.

He likes to entertain young women in real style at *TO*'s local Pizza Express. Lunching there one recent Monday, the ageing "Heffalump" gave the entire restaurant the benefit of his views on Asian eating habits ("dire") and PR staff at the BBC ("fat lesbians") as well as sharing a hilarious story about a "tart" who married a Jew.

No doubt the deeply fashionable "non-sexist, non-racist, non-homophobic" readers *TO* works so hard to cultivate would dismiss it all as harmless banter over a couple of bottles of Orvieto.

Yes, It's Bob-a-job Week!

WHILE Kevin Maxwell prepares for another long spell in the dock, several of Cap'n Bob's other flunkies seem to go from strength to strength, their reputations unblemished by their close association with the fat man.

But it remains to be seen whether they will continue to flourish once Tom Bower's new book, *Maxwell: The Final Verdict*, is widely read and digested. Here is a brief guide to some of the prominent figures whose antics deserve closer scrutiny...

PETER JAY: In the summer of 1987, when Robert Maxwell learned that Tom Bower was preparing to write his unauthorised biography, he ordered Jay, his absurdly-named "chief of staff", to find out who the author was seeing and what he had discovered.

Jay's first wheeze was to apply to the courts for an "Anton Piller order", which would enable "Bower's records to be seized under warrant, without advance notice being given, therefore without Bower having an opportunity to destroy or conceal such records". Alas, as Jay noted in a secret memo to Maxwell headed "Bower's Computer", an Anton Piller order can only be used to seize documents for the investigation of fraud or systematic dishonesty. "Legally speaking," Jay concluded mournfully, "this is not (quite) the situation with Bower."

Undeterred Jay then hired one of Britain's leading private detective agencies, Control Risks, to spy on Bower's house in Hampstead. Control Risks suggested Jay should buy an "extremely sophisticated" scanning device, which would emit rays capable of penetrating the walls of the author's study and "reading" the contents of his computer's hard disc. But the cost of the device — £50,000 — was prohibitive.

Nevertheless Jay continued to apply himself energetically to the task of trying to suppress Bower's book, right up until he left Maxwell's staff in 1989.

And where is he now, this man who was so eager to use secret surveillance and legal intimidation against a journalist who was seeking to expose the truth? Why, he has become a journalist himself: he is currently employed as economics editor of the BBC, where he enjoys the full confidence of his old mate John Birt, the director-general. Coincidentally, Jay's Maxwellian past was described in a BBC film made by Bower which was due to be transmitted in the *Panorama* slot two weeks ago; but, at the last minute, the programme was shelved.

LORD DONOUGHUE: A former adviser to James Callaghan who then went into the City, Donoughue was recruited by Maxwell in 1988 as executive vice-chairman of London & Bishopsgate Investments, which controlled the Mirror pension funds. He was awarded a salary of £180,000, a £36,000 annual contribution to his pension, a Christmas bonus of £200,000 — and the use of a lavish house in Westminster.

A year later Donoughue joined the board of First Tokyo Trust, in which Maxwell had bought a 25 percent stake. First Tokyo then diversified into "stock-lending" — a perfectly legitimate and common technique. What was rather less usual was that some of First Tokyo's stock was lent, not in an orthodox way on the open market, but privately to London & Bishopsgate Holdings, another Maxwell company. And the collateral for the stock was not cash but shares in Maxwell Communications Corporation. "The evidence suggests," according to Bower, "that by February 1990 Lord Donoughue ought to have suspected the unannounced use of those shares."

When a "hole" was discovered in the Mirror pension fund shortly after Maxwell's death, Donoughue's solicitors sent a letter to Fleet Street editors announcing that his lordship had resigned as a director of LBI in July 1991, and therefore couldn't be expected to know anything about it. If his name were mentioned in connection with the pensions affair, the lawyers warned, libel writs might well follow.

In fact, as Bower now reveals, Donoughue remained on the LBI payroll until September 1991

— less than two months before Cap'n Bob's watery demise — while he haggled over his severance payments. In the end, Maxwell gave him a golden handshake of £230,000, plus another £50,000 which was conditional on Donoughue promising never to talk or write about Maxwell and his business affairs. "Given that Donoughue had remained silent for two years about Maxwell's secret use of First Tokyo investments and had not interfered with LBI's 'stock lending' programme of the pension funds' shares," Bower comments, "the beleaguered chairman had good reason to believe that he could rely on the man who pompously signed their agreement 'Donoughue of Ashton'."

And where is he now, this taciturn peer whose silence was so easily if expensively bought? He can be found on the Labour frontbench in the House of Lords, and is expected to have a ministerial post in Tony "stakeholder" Blair's government.

LORD RIPPON: The former cabinet minister Geoffrey Rippon was a director of Maxwell Communications Corporation and chairman of Brasseys, the military publisher owned by Maxwell, for which he was paid $100,000 a year plus generous expenses. But Rippon was also chairman of the merchant bank Robert Fraser, through which Maxwell transferred to MCC and Pergamon Holdings some of the money taken from the pension funds; and, according to Bower, Robert Fraser "had completed three property deals to pump profits into MCC which later investigation would reveal to be dubious. In 1989, no less than 33 per cent of MCC's profits were 'one-off' transactions with Robert Fraser recorded just before the announcement of the interim profits". As luck would have it, Rippon was absent from the MCC board meeting on 4 July 1991 at which these questionable property deals were raised, and he therefore had no need to declare or explain his bank's involvement in the transactions.

And where is Lord Rippon now? When not sitting in the House of Lords, he is president of the Institute of Credit Management, chairman of Dun and Bradstreet Ltd and Unichem, and Pro-Chancellor of London University.

SCOTTISH SPECIAL

IN THE Scottish tabloid war the Scottish edition of the *Sun* and the *Daily Mirror* equivalent, the *Daily Record*, aren't squabbling over exclusives: they are swapping insults over their editors' private lives.

It began when the *Sun*'s Bob Bird and Terry Quinn of the *Record* had a heated exchange while together on a chat show.

The latest spat started when the *Sun* ran a photo-story on its problem page featuring a mustachioed loser called Terry who wore a shell suit and read the *Daily Record*. The Terry Quinn lookalike was told to "Beat it, caterpillar-lip!", while an attractive woman in the story remarked "What a plonker!".

Not to be outdone the *Record* hired Bird's former secretary, who had left her job in peculiar circumstances when Bob and his wife, TV presenter Jackie, were going through marital difficulties. Bob was treated to the sight of his ex-employee wearing a sombrero, beaming out from the front of the *Record* and supposedly advertising Scratchcards with the caption "Free As A Bird With A Few Bob To Spare".

Scotland is holding its breath for the next bout of in-fighting.

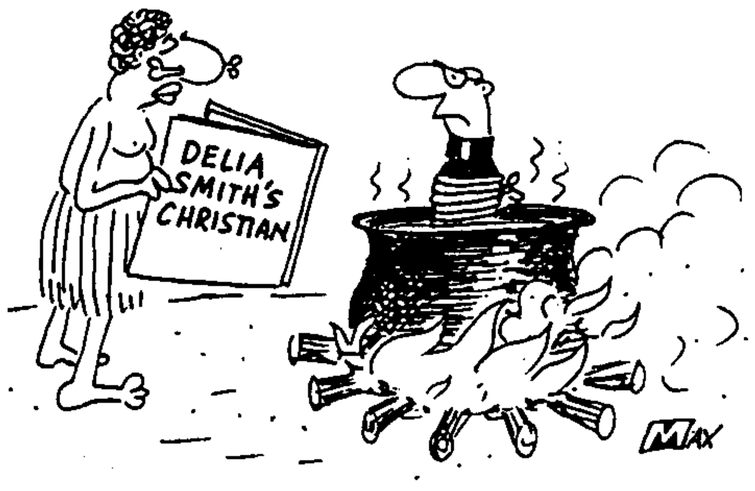
HALLO!

THE HEARTWARMING COLUMN

HALLO! WITH the media hounding her at every turn, why did Old Paulina Harriet Harman choose to break her silence on the little-watched *Channel 4 News*?

The answer can be found around the Islington dinner tables favoured by the Blair clique, where Harman and her husband Jack Dromey can often be found. Frequent fellow guests of Harriet and Jack at the Blair table include former SDP member now returned to the fold Derek Scott and his wife Elinor Goodman — who just happens to be political editor of... *Channel Four News*.

Outside of the Blair household and its satellites, Harman's judgement is still being questioned, however, even by the "new" Labour chatterati. "Why didn't she just send the kid to the local comp, and get a private tutor in the evenings like everyone else?" one was overheard asking another.



HALLO! *RAILTRACK chairman Bob 'Busy' Horton is rightly celebrating the triumphant start to rail privatisation. This weekend he and other main board members will travel, first class, from West Yorkshire to wine, dine and enjoy the best tickets for the West End show, Mack and Mabel.*

They will, naturally, be staying at the Savoy Hotel. Who will foot the massive bill? Shareholders, naturally!

However, a memo warns: "massages and other treatments are available on request at an extra charge."

Bob and his merry men must be seething at such ingratitude!

HALLO! WE have been lending a sympathetic ear to our dear and much-maligned friend, Keith Cooper, Royal Opera House supremo and axeman extraordinaire. He is very much hurt by his portrayal in Channel 4's documentary opera-soap *The House*, where he is cast as the villain of the piece, a mean old queen bent on sacking anything that isn't nailed down.

How unfair! The film did not tell the whole story of the sacking and Keith could have been crueller if he wanted to.We can certainly vouch for Keith's loving, caring nature. Just look at the kindness he's shown to Andrew Stokes, who replaced sacked box office manager Andrew Fallon.Stokes quickly rose through the ranks to become Head of Sales and Marketing.

Indeed, the devotion Keith showed to his protégé's talents was so keen that it may have caused the teensiest bit of friction on the home-front. However, Keith insists that the black eye and gashed brow he sported one morning was simply the result of foolishly bringing the garage door sharply down on his own head. Perhaps he was a little groggy after a long night of frugging at the Fridge in Brixton with his new friend?

HALLO! *"NO Iranian torturer could have elicited a greater variety of winces and flinches," writes Martin Amis courageously in the New Yorker.*

Was he commenting on Iran where, Amnesty International confirms, "death, lashing and torture are indeed common"? Er, no. He was describing a visit to the cinema with his writer chum, Salman Rushdie.

Amis recorded the "torture" of sitting through Four Weddings And A Funeral and noted how because of Rushdie's predicament the two men couldn't leave the cinema for security reasons.

"The world has bad taste," Salman patiently explained to his fellow novelist after seeing the film. "Didn't you know that?" Of course the two courageous iconoclasts know that: why else do publishers pay so much for their ridiculous books?

HALLO! TO the River Cafe in Hammersmith to dine with my incredibly clever friend Gore Vidal — or 'King Fag' as he now insists on calling himself.

The great American novelist and man of letters is promoting his memoirs, but he is distracted when one important dinner guest, invited as someone whom Gore really should meet, arrives late, pleading his awesome job responsibilities as the reason for his tardiness.

When Gore sees the late arrival his eyes twinkle and he whispers into the ear of his neighbour: "Tell me... who's that little Arab boy?"

Luckily the object of Gore's lascivious admiration, the very grown-up BBC1 controller Alan Yentob, doesn't hear.

HALLO! MY fun-loving *protégée* Annabel Heseltine scoops the only interview with the disgraced Lord Brocket, as he prepares to go to jail for a £4.5 million vintage car fraud. "He has lost everything," writes the deputy Prime Minister's dizzy daughter. "His marriage, his children, his inheritance (the stunning Brocket Hall) and his honour."

The aristocratic swindler admits he should never have married Isa Lorenzo, the beautiful half-Cuban former top model — but, he says, he was on the rebound.

Heavens, from whom? In her excitement, blonde 'Bel' quite forgets to mention in her lengthy article that she 'stepped-out' for a couple of years with the dim peer, and that he had even begged her to marry him.

"Charles Brocket was a difficult man to live with," she concludes. "He was nit picking, demanding, distant and immature."

Goodness, how would Annabel know? She turned him down flat!

HALLO! *THE Duchess of York, following some unkind publicity regarding her temporary 'liquidity problem', has regrettably been writing rude letters to formerly friendly gentlemen of the press. But then La Freebiana has never quite got the hang of public relations. One of her former PR advisers explained to the Marquesa: "The Duchess paid me an awful lot of moolah — and then simply ignored every single thing I said!"*

Goodness, what could have been the problem?

The well-bred PR person thought hard before summing up. "She's, um, frightfully thick."

'The Marquesa'

NEW LABOUR GIRLS
1 Maria Eagle

HARRIET Harman isn't the only "new" Labour woman upsetting traditionalists.

In Liverpool Maria Eagle, prospective parliamentary candidate for Garston, has made herself deeply unpopular with Labour activists through her professional role as a solicitor. Her job seems to consist mainly of suing the Labour council over housing repairs.

Outraged councillors in her own party claim the housing budget is being eaten up in legal costs thanks to local law firms who encourage tenants to sue — thus creating an even bigger backlog in repairs.

Housing chair Margaret Clarke denounced such lawyers as "piranhas and parasites" at a recent council meeting. Rubbing it in, Militant Labour councillor George Knibb brandished a letter advising one of his constituents to sue signed by... Maria Eagle.

The firm of Goldsmith & Williams (dubbed Goldmine & Williams), for which Eagle has worked, circulated parts of Eagle's would-be constituency touting for business. It will be interesting to see how Eagle handles her caseload when she becomes MP

NO SOONER had Labour leader Tony Blair announced plans for a "soundbite society" (*"stakeholder society", shurely?*) than it ran aground in Hartlepool, home constituency of his spin doctor-in-chief, Peter Mandelson.

Blair was there to hand over enterprise awards, symbols of his commitment to "stakeholding", at a ceremony for the region's business people. Mandelson smirked as Blair proudly presented an award to Mutual Securities. But he smirked too soon.

While the company's boss Kevin Cranney appears to be a perfect stakeholder — local councillor, job provider, kind to animals, etc — unfortunately for Mr Blair he is also completely bankrupt. His prize-winning firm has crashed with debts of more than £200,000, 35 workers are on the dole and the fraud squad is now investigating the accounts. "New Labour — the small bankrupt's friend"?

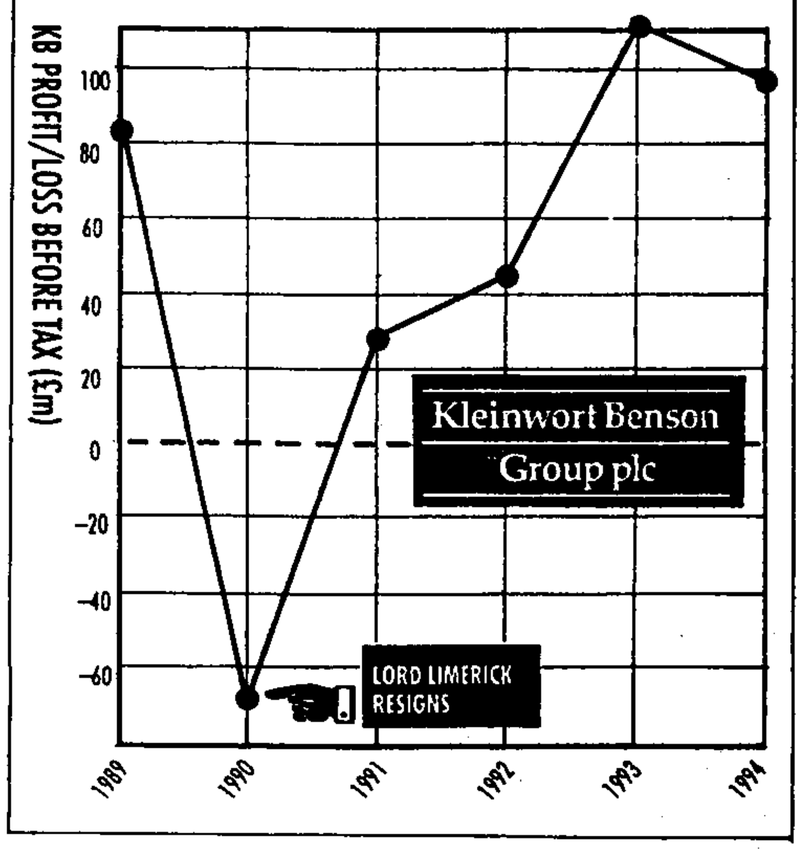
HANDSOME Hartley 'Hanger' Booth, Lady Thatcher's successor as Tory MP for Finchley, was among the most ferocious government critics of poor Harriet 'Hypocrisy' Harman's decision to send her son Joe to a select school. There can be no questioning Hartley's commitment to state education, as (along with Emma Nicholson) he is a governor of hugely egalitarian £9,000-a-year Queens College in Taunton.

Nor could anyone possibly accuse the saintly Hartley of hypocrisy himself, simply because he was forced to cancel a long-scheduled visit to the devoutly Methodist Queens — after the publication of syrupy love poems, addressed to pouting Commons researcher Emily Barr.

Why, when special adviser to Thatch at Downing Street, 'Snogger' was one of the earliest advocates of 'Family Values'!

British Management Part 33.

6th EARL OF LIMERICK, Chairman Pirelli UK and De La Rue plc. Former under-secretary of state, Department of Trade. Director Kleinwort Benson plc until 1990.



PUBLICITY-shy Lady Olga Maitland, Tory MP for Sutton and Cheam, was telephoned recently by a constituent seeking her views on the wild mammals protection bill.

"I'm all for it," she trilled. In fact, she confided, she was going into the House especially to vote on the issue.

The constituent was puzzled by this apparently softer side of his MP and asked where she stood on fox hunting. "Oh, it's beautiful and a bloody good sport," she squawked. When the bemused constituent asked if these views were compatible she bellowed: "You'd better not bloody well quote me on that" and slammed the phone down.

THE announcement by Tim Eggar, energy minister, that he is to stand down at the next election is the decision of a disappointed man. He dreamed of becoming foreign secretary — but no one took any notice.

In fact diplomacy was not the obvious strongpoint of the minister who achieved fame by rolling around in the street while having a punch-up with a neighbour. And at the department of trade, where the energy portfolio now resides, he was passed over last July when his boss, Michael Heseltine, moved up to become deputy prime minister in charge of everything.

Eggar had been allocated much of the dirty work of implementing Heseltine's policies (such as the destruction of the coal industry) and could reasonably have expected to be promoted to the top job. Instead Ian Lang was moved in from the Scottish Office, the implication being that Hezza had not recommended his deputy. Energy is now under a minister who is not so much a lame duck as a dead duck.

Eggar intends to go into private industry. He has spent a lot of his time in office as a commercial traveller, taking teams of oil and gas company businessmen around the world in search of profit. His experience before he entered parliament was in oil — he was a director of Charterhouse Petroleum and now enjoys close relations with Shell (Nigeria, Brent Spar, etc). They and other energy companies will be waving cheque books at him. Naturally, he will not allow this to influence him. He can be expected to maintain the high standards of disinterested public service which have been such a marked characteristic of the Major government.

THREE Tory MPs have actually expressed disgust for a new road scheme.

Harry Greenway, MP for Ealing North, Anthony Steen, MP for South Hams, and Iain Mills, MP for Meriden, all expressed outrage at plans for road changes in Westminster.

Were they suddenly struck by environmental concerns? Not quite. Although the scheme aims to improve safety at an accident blackspot the trio objected — but not presumably because they lived nearby and the changes would add to their journey time to the House of Commons.

Naturally the flagship Tory council of Westminster immediately acquiesced to the MPs' demands — and the accidents continue.

'Backbiter'

FOCUS ON LORD HANSON

POOR Jimmy Hanson. His final agm chairing the Anglo-American conglomerate that bears his name was a shambles, disrupted by hecklers and organised malcontents.

"Oh for God's sake shut up," he yelled at Hopi and Navaho tribesmen complaining about Hanson's opencast mining poisoning their drinking water. Buddies like Roger Moore, recent recipient of Hanson largesse in an expensive and now pointless ad for the group, watched in horror as Jimmy lost his cool.

In fact the week got worse for Jimmy when, after the announcement that the company was splitting up into four pieces, the share price fell sharply as analysts totted up the value of the bits and worked out it was worth less than the whole had been. Friendly Tory papers made it worse by running unkind stories about Jimmy's son and heir Robert, highlighting his unfortunate past as an Oxford tearaway and destroyer of restaurants.

Meanwhile an ungrateful City was griping that since Robert's arrival on the board, Hanson shares had become one of the poorest performing stocks on the FTSE-100.

So why did Hanson blow the company apart? Some City gossips say that non-family executives panicked when Jimmy said he was going in "97" — did he mean when *he* was 97? Others say Jimmy was terrified that once he was out the door with the gold watch Junior would follow, hotly pursued by his nephew-in-law, the highly talented former wine merchant and amateur jockey Christopher Collins, currently vice chairman of the group.

It's a tough time for those would-be 1980s dynasts with Kevin Maxwell facing a further trial and Rocco out on his ear at Forte. Despite the outstanding qualifications of a second class English degree from Pot Hall, years of hard partying (*shurely "training"? Ed*) at City bankers Rothschilds, and vast international polo experience, what chance would 35-year-old Junior have had up against the faceless numbers men who would take over at Grosvenor Place once Jimmy had gone?

Things may be different at "Rump" Hanson, where Jimmy and the family will play. But as little more than a glorified sand, gravel and brick company, will it be able to support the Hanson family in the style to which they are accustomed? How will a piddling FTSE-100 company be able to indulge such expensive tastes as Melody Radio, fleets of helicopters, international offices and expensive interior decorators, as well as a palatial Belgravia office overlooking Buckingham Palace?

And if the Rump has such hot prospects, why is all the talent at Hanson jumping ship to the other three pieces?

NOOKS and CORNERS

BATTLEFIELD, on the unfashionable south side of Glasgow, European City of Culture, is distinguished by a monument to the final defeat of Mary Queen of Scots and by the rambling bulk of the Victoria Infirmary.

And opposite the infirmary in Grange Road, next to the restored old Battlefield Rest tram stop, was the former Queen's Park School. This consisted of four buildings. Two were Gothic, dating from 1874, while two were Edwardian in red sandstone, both designed by interesting architects: H&D Barclay and Thomson & Sandilands. All were listed, category B.

An application to demolish was refused in 1988. A further application to demolish was made last August. Ryden Property Consultants argued that the "best option is demolition" to create "a more marketable site". This was strongly opposed by the Scottish Civic Trust, which maintained that the condition reports did not provide conclusive evidence that demolition was the only option and that the

buildings could perfectly well be restored — especially as many of the interiors were of considerable quality. No matter: in the time honoured Glasgow way the building control officer obligingly intervened and declared three of the buildings to be dangerous structures. What was the "Grange Resource Centre" is now largely piles of rubble.

Now why were these buildings in poor condition? Surely their owner had a legal obligation to maintain them? Well, yes; but the owner just happened to be Strathclyde regional council, the monstrous Labour-controlled local authority which is, at long last, to become extinct on 1 April.

Strathclyde regional council was one of the supporters of Glasgow's successful bid to be City of Architecture and Design in 1999, so it obviously knows all about architecture even if Glasgow district council — no mean neglecter of property itself — might be reluctant to serve it with a repairs notice. As it happens, the district council now has to consider a planning application for the site, which, if Grange Road is closed as proposed, becomes directly linked with the Victoria Infirmary. And, oddly enough, this NHS trust has been most anxious to expand... So if the remaining building — by H&D Barclay — can be disposed of, a complete new cleared site happily becomes available.

Such are civic priorities in the City of Architecture and Design. And Strathclyde went further in its deep commitment to modern ideas of conservation and the recycling of non-renewable resources. An architectural salvage firm which approached Mr John Woods of Strathclyde's engineering department was rudely rebuffed. None of that nonsense here: he would much rather that sound sandstone, tiles, panelling and cast iron details were all smashed up together by bulldozers, ready for the skip.

VISITORS to Glasgow in the** annus mirabilis **MCMIC will be further cheered by more forward-looking demolitions planned by the Labour-controlled city council.

Last October full planning permission was granted for the M74 extension, which will smash its way through the south side of the city from Rutherglen to the collapsing Kingston Bridge, sweeping away a dozen listed buildings as well as many working industrial units. This motorway with its associated roadworks is directly contrary to the industrial, railway and refuse waste disposal zonings in the City of Glasgow development plan quinquennial review; contrary to industrial zoning in Lanark county development plan; contrary to industrial land use policy in Farme Cross local plan; contrary to industrial and open space land use policies in Rutherglen Cambuslang local plan; contrary to residential and open space land use policies in King's Park, Toryglen and Mount Florida local plan; and contrary to industrial land use policy in Pollokshields Dumbreck local plan (I quote from the director of planning's official letter).

It is also, of course, contrary to the Labour party's own policy on road building, while even the present car-mad Conservative government seems to be having second thoughts about yet more motorways and has cut back the budget for road building. Spending huge sums of money to drive a motorway through an inner-urban area in a poor city with a low rate of car-ownership is also, of course, contrary to common sense. But that seems to be a commodity in short supply in the City of Architecture and Design for 1999.

'Piloti'

THE BATTLE OF NEWBURY

DOZY yokels in Berkshire have been appalled by the mayhem caused by "security" guards drafted in to secure construction of the Newbury by-pass.

This army of unwashed and largely untrained yobbos has been housed at considerable public expense in unheated government premises, where temperatures recently dropped to -12° and morale is rock bottom. While many have gone AWOL, others recently went on a major shoplifting spree in a local off-licence. Later that evening the "security experts" gave a demonstration of highly realistic hand-to-hand combat in a local pub. There have been several such outbreaks of violence, with guards relieving their frustration by beating each other up.

One pub landlord went on TV to announce that they would be welcome to spend their £3-per-hour new wealth in his establishment — only to evict several drunks, who retaliated by stealing the paintings from the pub's walls. To avoid a full-scale mutiny, the authorities began bussing the gorillas to a local McDonald's. Local beauty spots are now littered not only with beer cans but plastic burger containers, too.

There has, however, been one conspicuous victory. A protester has been charged for trespassing, in the words of the charge sheet: "dressed as a pantomime cow." The name of person charged? Daisy.

LIBEL NEWS

LONG before the celebrated McLibel proceedings were started by the McDonalds fast food chain against derogatory leaflets issued by a handful of protestors in London Greenpeace, McDonalds had been spying on its accusers.

Seven "agents" were specially and expensively recruited by the food chain to infiltrate London Greenpeace in an attempt to stop the planned leafleting campaign. London Greenpeace was a tiny organisation, and not to be confused with the well-known environmental campaigners, Greenpeace.

At its highest London Greenpeace could muster 10 members, so the infiltration by the McDonalds Seven was, at once, highly conspicuous. To disguise their real identity the agents threw themselves enthusiastically into the campaign against McDonalds, and even agreed to hand out the leaflets which eventually became the subject of the libel action. This is believed to be the first case in libel history where a company has sued over material partly distributed by its own agents.

Pseuds Corner

He [David Stevenson, head of Channel 4 Youth Programmes] believes his item showing viewers how to grow mustard and cress on a used tampon is "tackling the taboo area of menstruation with wit and delicacy".

Daily Telegraph

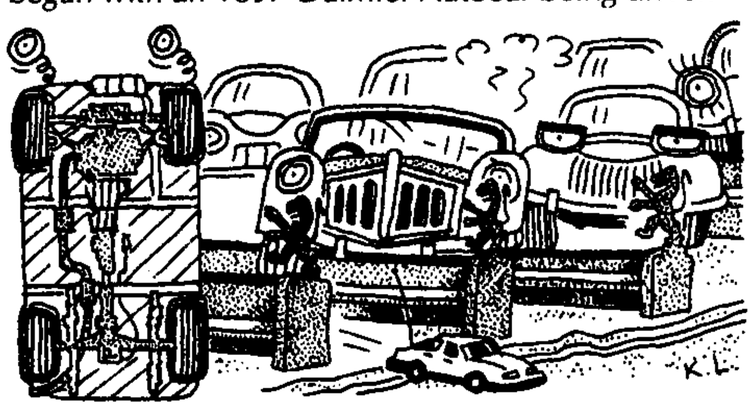
The spirit of St Etienne resides in several select sites and states of mind. The smell and sheen of a dismayed seaside town the day after summer; anticipation; the straight, shiny, swinging hair of the perfect sixties girl as she jumps ceaselessly in slo-mo into the perfect MG; sorrow, often so sumptuous that it feels like pleasure; the lonely splendour of the first Model Home in Milton Keynes; the sheer heart-stopping unimpeachable joy of waking up in the morning and still being English.

JULIE BURCHILL
Sleeve notes to 'St Etienne: Too Young To Die, Singles 1990-1995'

This was clearly the Rat And Parrot's *pièce de resistance*; and I feel certain that for sheer chutzpah its title takes the proverbial: Skins, Wings, Rings And Things. You heard it here first. On contemplating this astonishing description, Martin quipped: "It sounds like the detritus that might be left behind by a rabbinical serial killer".

WILL SELF
Observer

The Right Reverend Simon Barrington-Ward, Bishop of Coventry, defended the service, which had been initiated by Coventry councillors. The proceedings began with an 1897 Daimler Autocar being driven



up the aisle and ended with an electric Peugeot 106, also made in Coventry, gliding out of the West Door...

In a sermon on the parable of the two cars, he said that the Daimler represented the thanksgiving for all the benefits the car had bestowed, and the Peugeot man's penitance (sic) for the way it had been misused. Prince Michael gave a short reading.

The Times

Fuller, a member of the British-based poster collective Anticopyright Network, views the flyposter in an analytical framework: "The flyposter's intervention in public space — in physical terms, disruption — is minimal. It is gone almost as soon as it is placed... The flyposter formalizes a necessary impermanence — its brief presence attempting to stimulate the viewer by denying itself fixity, interested in diffusion and not central points..."

Utne Reader (US)

Choreographed by Kirsty Tapp, the cast of Ziggurat prepare to enter the chrysalis of the spiracle eye and present the artist's struggle to capture the butterfly of inspiration, while riding his horse across the prairie and stonking orchids... shrinking violets... wilting wallflowers.

Resolution! series of contemporary dance, Place Theatre

CONTRIBUTORS: A. Non, D. Griffin, L. Hayes, J. Dover, A. Dalingwater, S. Blackmore.

£10 paid for entries

EYE TV

Annie's Bar
(Channel 4)

WHEN the queen consented to appear in a television programme in the 1960s, a popular satirical conceit of the time was to speculate on what other shows the monarch and her family might produce were they to "get the bug".

But yesterday's satire has a habit of becoming today's front page, and these days most of the royals do have their own shows. Diana is a famous chat-show guest; Fergie is supposedly negotiating to be a chat-show host; several radio stations are working on plans for Phil the Greek's mobile phone-in; and Prince Edward now has his own sitcom.

The first major work of his company Ardent Productions, *Annie's Bar* — set in Westminster's famous drinking hole — is the most publicised comedy in the history of television, a phenomenon which tells you much about the residual deep monarchism of the media, despite recent events.

The second main claim about the series, apart from its unprecedented blue blood, was its satirical immediacy. Copying the system used by *Drop The Dead Donkey*, the bulk of the show would be recorded in advance with topical gobbets dropped in just before transmission. This promise, though, was doubly misguided. For a start, *Drop The Dead Donkey* gradually abandoned its eleventh hour wit over the course of its opening runs and relied for its success on traditional character interaction.

The second, graver, difficulty was that so many of the big topical stories at the moment involve "Edward Windsor's" relatives. As if the gods of comedy were taunting it, the major front-page story in the week of the launch of *Annie's Bar* was the recording of a private phone call involving the Duke of Edinburgh. This — along with the financial troubles of "Edward Windsor's" sister-in-law, the Duchess of York — was the major topic of conversation and source of humour in the real Annie's Bar last week. But not, oddly, in the televisual *Annie's Bar*.

Has Channel 4 raised this difficulty with Ardent Productions? Suppose the show had been going out in the week of the royal separation announcement or the queen's agreement to pay taxes or Diana's appearance on *Panorama*: would the channel have been in the position of transmitting the only supposedly topical show in existence to include no mention of these issues?

This specific reticence is exacerbated by a more general one. The attitude of *Annie's Bar* towards politicians is pre-*Yes, Minister* — where any mild knock at authority figures in sitcoms seemed daring — when the genre is now post-*House of Cards*, in which politicians were depicted as murderers, drug addicts, priapists and psychopaths. In *Annie's Bar*, a young Tory is a bit dim, a Tory whip a little brutal and a Labour backbencher a bit of a wideboy.

Indeed, even more worryingly, the series seems obsessed with winning the appropriation of serving parliamentarians: media tarts Austin Mitchell and Edwina Currie hammed through walk-ons in the opening episode. Incidentally, the scene in which Mrs Currie openly plugged her new novel was a clear breach of the rules relating to product-placement in drama and we must hope the ITC will soon be summoning Prince Edward to account.

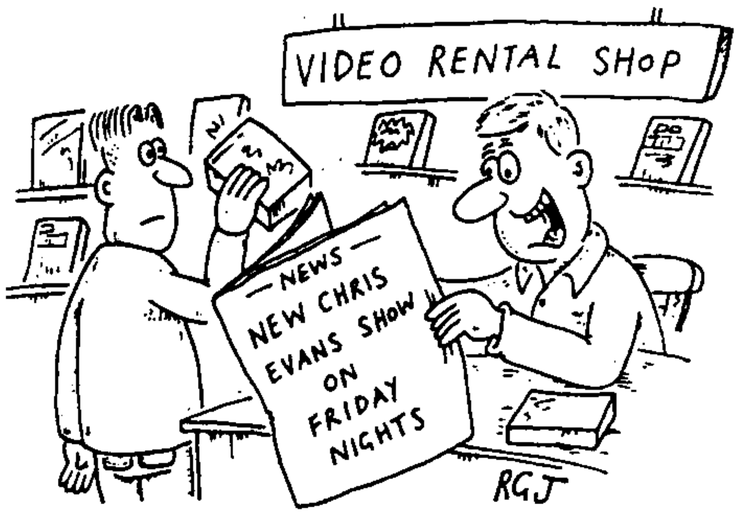
'Square Eyes'

ITV sport has been crowing over its winning £65 million bid for formula one racing, but its victory is not as clear cut as it first appeared: ITV will have to broadcast the grand prix races under the rigorous eye of formula one's owner, Bernie Ecclestone.

ITV, high on the wave of winning the FA cup from the BBC, only belatedly realised some of the difficulties they will face broadcasting the sport and negotiating with Ecclestone.

Firstly, they realised it will be very hard to put in advert breaks without risking missing a vital moment in the race. So they asked Ecclestone if they could put in a 15 minute time delay to fit the adverts in. Ecclestone was uncompromising: live television meant live television.

Next the ITV chiefs realised with mounting panic that, because of the time difference, the races from Brazil, Canada, and Argentina will take place on Sundays between 5pm and 7pm British time. This was no problem for the Beeb, who just stuck the awkward races on BBC2; but the ITV sports department will be left begging the network to override their popular Sunday evening programmes for the three grand prixs. If the network says no, the sports department will be in breach of its contract with formula one and will have to face the wrath of Bernie.



"We're rich!"

I-Sky

In a free country a sporting event, say Wimbledon, should be able to sell its product to the highest bidder. And to hell with those who don't like it... The major sporting bodies were squeezed for far too long by th monopolies of the BBC and ITV. Sky did away with that.

TAKI
The Sunday Times

CONTRIBUTOR: Francis Boundy

An occasional column for which readers are invited to submit Sky-plugs masquerading as news items in Murdoch papers. The usual £10 will be paid.

MEDIA NEWS

L!VE TV, the pisspoor Mirror Group cable TV channel, has been so taken with the success of topless darts it has bought its own live sport.

While the big channels fight over premier league football, L!ve TV has snapped up the prestigious sport of, er, speed skating.

When skating fan(s) eagerly tuned in they were treated to L!ve's wobbly camera angles of the circuit and a banal commentary. Then, just as the skaters were approaching the finish line, the commentator's voice rose to a squeal in anticipation... and L!ve's technicians switched to the adverts. A sheepish voiceover promised viewer(s) they would show the whole race again later, including the finish.

Meanwhile the Mirror Group channel's soap opera *Canary Wharf* has begun with viewers promised plenty of snogs per episode. One instalment featured a young man reading the *Daily Mirror* and commentating to his companion: "Well, thank God the *Mirror* still has the balls to publish good stories." Pass the sick bag...

ANDREW "Brillo Pad" Neill's brilliant TV career continues with a move into daytime telly and the imaginatively named *Andrew Neill Show*.

After his scintillating Channel Four chat show *Is this your life?* came to an end, Neill went to the Beeb. Unfortunately his afternoon show there only has a 10-week run and in mid-March will be replaced by something equally entertaining, engrossing and youthful — the bowls championships.

Meanwhile Neill and his production team have managed to alienate thousands of potential viewers on the Internet. Various special-interest "news groups" have been swamped by extended and inappropriate advertisements for the dismal TV show — for example, a question posted on the electronic noticeboard on the whereabouts of Phil Drabble was answered by Neill's team with the words: "Peter York will be the first guest on the Andrew Neil show on Thursday..." Even worse, these adverts have been "cross-posted" to other Internet groups — a practice known as "spamming" that is, quite understandably, much frowned-upon by users who have to pay phone bills to download this drivel to their computers.

HOUSE
IT'S A TIRED OLD CULTURAL INSTITUTION...
FULL OF PRIMA DONNAS GETTING HANDOUTS FROM THE TAXPAYER...
WITH FALLING STANDARDS AND MORALE...
WHERE A CLUELESS BOARD OF GOVERNORS APPOINT A SUPREMO...
WHO PUTS EVERYONES' BACKS UP!
"Toscas all round!"
BROADCASTING HOUSE
The Don Giovanni
Ken Pyne

A Matter of Public Interest

IN AN early-day motion two weeks ago, Brian Sedgemore MP named Cecil Parkinson as the mystery plaintiff who stopped a television programme about the revolutionary and successful treatment in Israel of Flora Keays (the daughter he has never set eyes upon, who had suffered from learning difficulties).

This has thrown the media into utter confusion. The *Guardian*, which ran a long piece about "Child Z" (as Flora is officially known) several days before Sedgemore tabled his motion, has maintained a deafening silence on the subject ever since. But its sister paper, the *Observer*, not only reported Sedgemore's revelation on its front page but followed this up last Sunday with a long and passionate feature about the "gagging" of Sara Keays. The story has also been taken up, prominently, by the *Sunday Express*, the *Daily Mail*, the *Independent* and *The Times*.

Under a high court order dating from 1993, the media are officially banned from "the publication of any information, in whatever form", about Flora Keays. The official solicitor, who is determined to uphold the injunction, claims that "it was made on the application of the advisers to both parents with the express intention of preserving the privacy of their daughter". The clear implication is that the gagging order was imposed at the request of both Parkinson and Keays, and with her full approval.

What actually happened is that in March 1993 Sara Keays went to court to apply for an increase in her maintenance payments. On the very morning of the trial, Parkinson's solicitors suddenly announced that he would be applying for an injunction to stop press coverage. Keays thought the application was unnecessary, but her lawyer explained that any attempt to contest it would delay the maintenance proceedings for several months. As she was more preoccupied with getting the money which she desperately needed to look after Flora, who was badly brain-damaged, she reluctantly agreed.

It was only after the hearing that she learned quite how draconian this Mary Bell order — named after a famous child killer — really was. Having thought that it merely prevented her from publicising the maintenance payments, she discovered that, in effect, it stopped her from talking about Flora at all. It meant, for instance, that she couldn't write to her local paper to say that she was dissatisfied with the local education authority's provision for children in Flora's condition. She was not even allowed to write to her MP or local councillor about Flora.

In September 1993 Keays went on Judy Finnigan's TV show and revealed that Cecil Parkinson had obtained a "gagging" order, "which I am now breaching". Parkinson immediately applied to the high court, where Mr Justice Singer granted an extra "*in personam*" injunction against Keays, restraining her from discussing Flora's "education, maintenance or financial circumstances" with anyone other than Parkinson's lawyers, the official solicitor and Flora's "medical and educational advisers".

This hardly suggests, as the official solicitor continues to insist, that Keays was an enthusiastic supporter of the original injunction. If she was, why did she herself break it so soon afterwards?

The more encouraging statement from the Official Solicitor is that although it is "quite improper" for "pejorative but ill-informed comments" to be made about Cecil Parkinson, "comments on the power of judges may be quite proper". He implies that the press is fully entitled to discuss the legal validity of judgments made in this case.

Brian Sedgemore MP has now taken up this issue and has written to the attorney-general querying the latest judgment in this absurd affair— which, he suggests, is deficient in both law,logic and justice.

LET US briefly summarise the case Sedgemore has been making. After an exceptionally difficult early childhood, marred by epilepsy and brain damage, Flora Keays has made astonishing progress in the past year thanks to her three-month stay at an institute in Jerusalem run by a Professor Feuerstein. When a TV company asked if it could make a film about Flora's great leap forward, Keays gladly agreed — largely because she felt it would give hope to other parents of children with learning disabilities (of whom there are estimated to be half a million in the country)and might encourage the NHS to make use of Feuerstein's techniques. A secondary reason was that, since Flora's earlier troubles had been widely reported (before the injunction was imposed), Keays wanted to correct the abiding public image of her daughter as a hopeless zombie.

During last year's hearings there was much discussion of the law relating to wards of court.This though is utterly irrelevant, since Flora is not a ward of court. Nor do the views of Cecil Parkinson have much relevance, since he has never seen or inquired after his child, and has not sought to obtain a parental responsibility order under the children act 1989. The courts would normally therefore claim jurisdiction over Flora only if they believe that Sara Keays's behaviour as a mother is irrational, irresponsible or an abuse of her parental power.

But the courts do not believe anything of the sort.Their assumption of parental responsibility creates a new legal precedent which ought to have been analysed in the House of Lords.

Taking up the Official Solicitor's indication that "comments on the power of judges may be quite proper" we turn to Mr Justice Cazalet.He admitted that Keays's "commitment, dedication and devotion to her in the light, in particular, of Flora's various educational, behavioural and emotional problems is worthy of high commendation". He also accepted that the making of the film would not be "disruptive or intrusive" to Flora.

Why, then, did he not waive the injunction? Anticipating one obvious conclusion that might be drawn, he hastened to announce "in the clearest possible terms that this court is not concerned in any way to protect the father's privacy or that of his family". However, he appeared to contradict himself by asking why "some other child" couldn't be used in the film instead, since "Flora is, and I repeat, a child of high profile parents".

Since the courts have found that Sara Keays has her daughter's interests at heart, and that there is no cause to "protect" Cecil Parkinson (who would not have been mentioned in the film anyway), what possible reason could there be for not letting the TV company go ahead? Allow Mr Justice Cazalet to explain: the programme could cause Flora "embarrassment and distress" since she might well have to answer intrusive questions from her peers afterwards. More precisely "she might be asked what it is like to be a member of a single parent family. "

This extraordinary decision is what Sedgemore is querying and is surely a matter of legitimate public concern.No judge can be unaware that 22 per cent of children in this country now come from one-parent families. Would Flora's "peers" really regard her membership of this large minority as a cause for amazement?

Nevertheless the Mary Bell order still stands, even though almost everyone in the land now knows who "Child Z" is. If legal action is taken against those editors who have covered the story, it could turn out to be the most pointless stable-door-bolting exercise since the great *Spycatcher* fiasco: in the past fortnight the injunction has been breached, to a greater or lesser extent, by the *Guardian*, the *Independent*, the *Times*, the *Daily Mirror*, the *Sunday Express* and the *Observer*.

There is one notable exception.Charles Moore of the *Daily Telegraph*, who ran a tremendously pompous editorial last week explaining why he was not identifying Child Z or her parents. He also attacked Brian Sedgemore for helping Keays's campaign.

What Moore neglected to add was that a few years ago, while he was contributing a regular column to the *Daily Express*, he wrote an extremely defamatory article about Sara Keays. She sued him for libel and collected substantial damages. However, it would be obviously absurd to suggest that he bears a grudge.

MUSIC & MUSICIANS

THE stories continue in Karen Gadd's musical empire (see *Eyes passim*), which left debts of £400,000 last summer after a very profitable concert series at Radley College.

The company that she ran then, Music and Fireworks, went into liquidation in September, but not before Gadd had transferred its few strippable assets to another company, Oxford Festivals. She sold this company to David Mayo, real name David Edmonds, who had worked for her at Music and Fireworks. He operated Oxford Festivals from Karen Gadd's same Cumnor Hill offices, but without her name on the notepaper.

Oxford Festivals organised five £175-a-head evenings of food and music at Raymond Blanc's Le Manoir au Quat' Saisons in October. But so dodgy was the reputation of the promoter the musicians threatened to pull out of the concerts a week before they took place unless they received their contracts from Le Manoir itself, together with payment in cash on the night.

However, income from these events was not enough to prevent Oxford Festivals from going the way of all Gadd-founded companies, for it went into liquidation at the end of 1995, dumping yet more angry employees.

But the story does not end there, and nor does Karen Gadd's part in it. David "Mayo" Edmonds copied Gadd's technique by transferring whatever he could from Oxford Festivals to another company of which he was a director, the Northampton-based Unusual Industries Ltd. This company promoted the VE Day event in Hyde Park, and has been involved in providing rigging for *Gladiators*. Unusual Industries Ltd is now planning to promote a new series of fireworks concerts this summer. And where else but at the accommodating Radley College (bursar: R. Beauchamp)?

'Lunchtime O'Boulez'

"Your tiny hand is... er... very warm"

DOING THE ROUNDS

THE British government, not content with suppressing and shredding a department of health guide that stated "working more than 48 hours a week doubles the risk of coronary heart disease", is persisting with its ludicrous and costly legal action against the European working hours directive to try to prevent more humane working conditions for British citizens.

The UK has more people working more than 48 hours a week, percentage-wise, than any other EU country and is top of the league for premature death due to heart disease. Could the two be related? I think we should be told.

● 1989-1994 saw a 13 percent cut in front-line staff on NHS wards (down 50,000); a 31 percent cut in nurses in training (down 19,020); and a 400 percent rise in managers (up 18,340). The average daily number of available beds across all departments is down 43,000 to 212,000 and the number of emergency beds is down 9,000 to 108,000. The terminal shortage of nurses was attributed by Bryan Stoten, chairman of **Birmingham health authority**, to "a fall in birth rate 25 years ago". And absolutely not because its a crap job with poor pay.

● EX-HEALTH secretary Sir Norman Fowler is so embarrassed by the nurse shortage and general disintegration of the NHS in his **Sutton Coldfield** constituency (*Eyes passim*), that he called in current health secretary Stephen Dorrell to make one of his famous flying pledges ("It'll be sorted out by next year. There's no extra money but I remain passionately committed to the NHS. I want to see in this country an NHS that delivers high quality care to all patients on the basis of clinical need without asking whether they can afford to pay for it.")

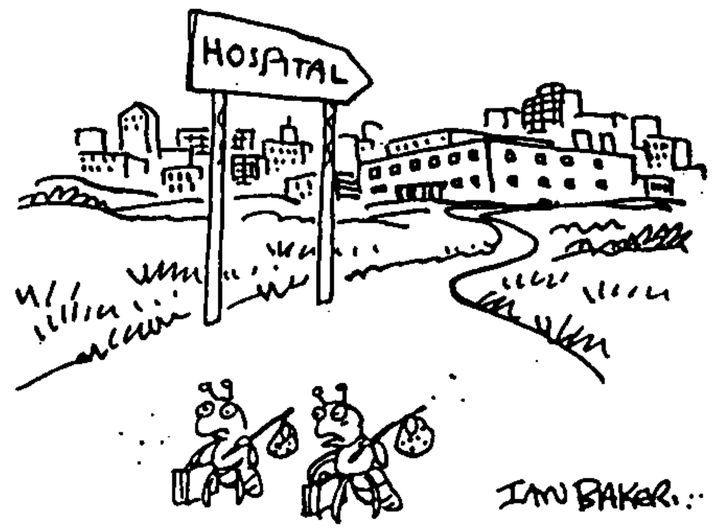
Mr Dorrell's comments coincided with the crashing of two Tornado jets in **Lincolnshire**. A critically injured fighter pilot was turned away from **Lincoln County hospital** and **Sheffield's Royal Hallamshire hospital**, because there were no intensive care beds. Or perhaps his clinical need wasnt great enough. Anyway, he ended up in **Nottingham**.

● **EAST Sussex** is another place not to pick up a head injury. A specialist bed could not be found for pensioner Eileen Woodgate at **Hurstwood Park**, near **Haywards Heath**, or **Londons Atkinson Morley** or **Kings hospitals**. She was eventually transferred an hour by helicopter to **Southampton**. The shortage of specialist neuro-surgery beds in the south-east will doubtless not be helped by the planned closure of Hurstwood Park, which follows the closure of the **Brook hospital** in south-east London.

● MR Dorrell's other famous quote for the week — "If you understand what care is available on a trolley, I don't think people would find a wait of a maximum of two hours unacceptable" — rang a few bells with 89-year-old Martha Williams. She spent just 24 hours on one with a fractured arm and pelvis in the delightful surroundings of **North Middlesex Hospital**. The "care on a trolley" made available to her consisted of 24 hours without any hot food or drink, even though she didn't need an operation. She finally got a drink of orange juice when another patient hopped of his trolley to get it. As a hospital spokeswoman put it: "I'm sorry. It's a typical winter scenario." So that's all right, then.

Nearby **Hornsey Central Hospital** could help out with the bed crisis — if it wasn't about to close itself. The highly regarded local hospital is to lose a life-saving contract from **Camden and Islington health authority** because not enough of the beds are occupied at any one time.

● 15,443 people died in the freezing weather over Christmas, 1,500 more than expected for the time of year and a key indicator of the progress the government is making with its health of the nation targets. A survey at **Stockports Stepping Hill Hospital**, where staff had to step over Christmas corpses on the floor because the mortuary fridges were full, found that a third of elderly patients admitted had reduced the heating in their homes because of fears about the extra costs of VAT on fuel. A Scottish study found that two thirds of the



"It's tough being a bedbug these days"

4,000 elderly people admitted with hypothermia each year had heating available in the home but did not turn it on. Incidentally, geriatric beds have fallen by 18,776 in the last four years, despite a large increase in demand for them from freezing pensioners.

● CONSULTANT psychiatrist Dr Massimo Riccio has resigned from Londons **Chelsea and Westminster Hospital** because of the pressure of "having to deal with more patients who are more severely ill with less facilities and [can you guess?] less beds". Also leaving is Dr Cosmo Hallstrom from Londons **Gordon hospital**. Cosmo cites "the stress of having to decide whether to discharge patients before they are ready to go, to admit others who are more acutely ill" as the reason for his burn-out.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

MORE than 300 critically ill children have been denied urgent treatment in the last year because of a nationwide bed and staffing crisis in paediatric intensive care units. Top turner-away is BBC1's **Great Ormond St Hospital** with 150 refusals and only 11 of its 19 intensive care beds open.

M.D.

DOWN ON THE FARM

NO ONE who has met Angela "Goldilocks" Browning, erstwhile junior Maffia minister, would suggest she is unintelligent. So when she stands up in parliament, as she did last week, and reels off statistics about the fate of British slaughterhouses, one must assume she understands what she is saying and has made some effort to check her facts.

One "fact" presented by Goldilocks was that, in the three years since the implementation of the 1992 EC-based meat "hygiene" regulations, only 51 slaughterhouses have closed down. But the real figure, according to the meat and livestock commission (MLC), which is the official body which collects such statistics, is not 51 but 151 — a minor error of 300 per cent.

Nor can it be assumed that this minor error was a mere slip of the tongue. La Browning was, in fact, making this figure the centrepiece of her argument to show that her wonderful officials had not, after all, unleashed a reign of terror on the meat men, intent on wiping out the industry.

By "demonstrating" that only 51 slaughterhouses had been closed down in three years, she was able to contrast this figure with an average closure rate during the last 22 years of 62 abattoirs a year.

La Browning has clearly omitted the inconvenient fact that, in 1977, the UK produced its own regulations which caused a massive fallout of slaughterhouses in the early 80s. The higher grade survivors, in the 10 years following this carnage, managed a loss rate of a mere 39 a year, until Browning's storm troopers stepped in and the yearly losses soared to an average of 50.

Of course the intelligent Mrs Browning could have worked this out for herself. Which leads one to conclude that, if she is no fool when it comes to using statistics, then she must be something else.

SPEAKING of economy with the *actualité*, Gary Coomber, the sheep farmer who had a near-fatal heart attack as a result of exposure to nerve-gas related organophosphorus (OP) sheep dip, has had an interesting experience.

He has been seeking technical evidence to support his pioneering case for damages in the courts; and where better to start, he thought, than to approach Porton Down, the government's top secret research centre which has more than a passing acquaintance with the effect of OP nerve-gases.

If nothing else the Porton Down reply was prompt — at least by current government standards — but it was also very terse. The "CBDE" as it now calls itself, was unable to help as, according to "managing director" Dr G.D. Coley, staff were "not aware of any reports" linking Coomber's condition with OPs.

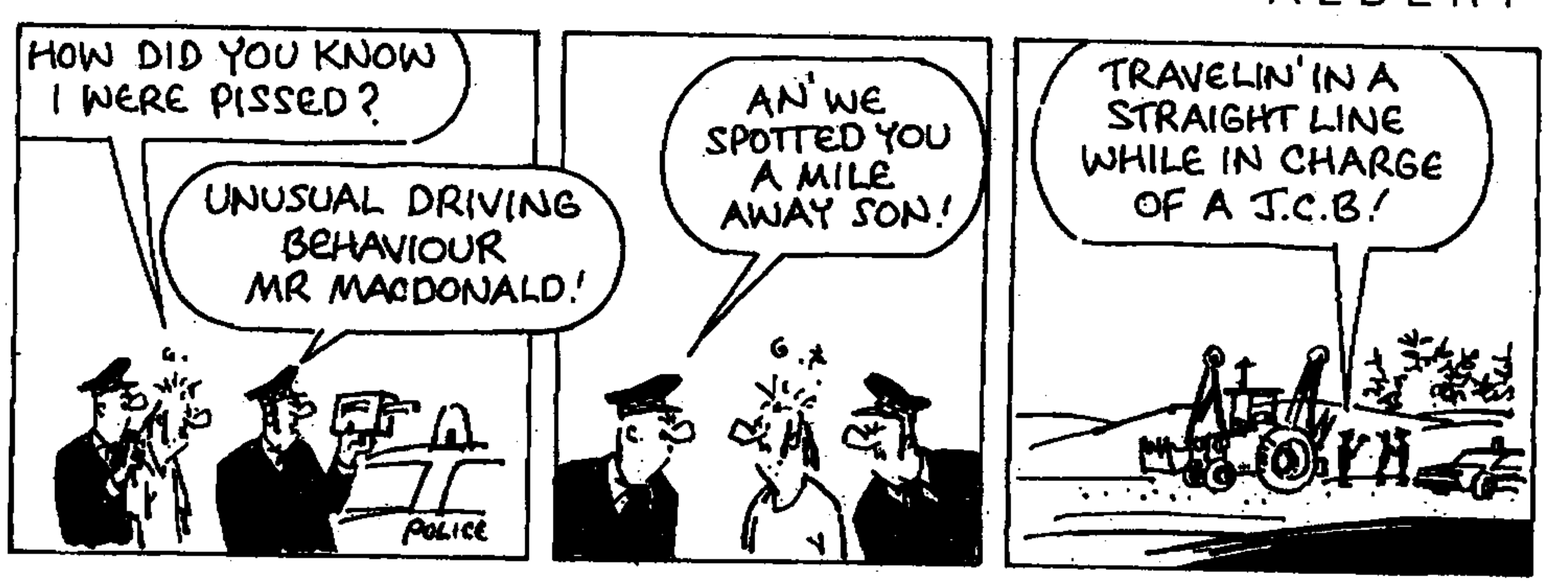
How strange, then, that the standard textbook on OP poisoning is written by a certain Dr Tim Mars, in which he gives copious details of heart problems arising from OP exposure. Even more interesting is the fact that Mars, before he joined the department of health to advise on toxicology, was employed by the ministry of defence, giving his address as, er — Porton Down, where he wrote his book.

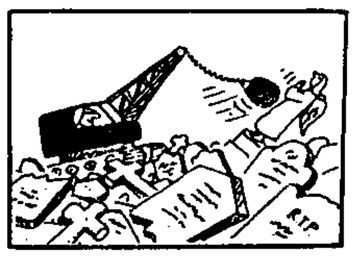
SUGAR beet growers, who have been banned by the Maffia from returning the soil washings from their produce back to the land for fear of spreading disease to their crops, have been up in arms recently. They are particularly vexed about a proposal to tax them £2 a tonne for the privilege of being forced to dispose of this high grade soil in landfill sites.

Faced with their protests, our kind and caring government, in the person of paymaster general David Heathcoat "Armoury", has considered their plight. As always he has responded in the usual caring fashion. He has decided the tax should go ahead.

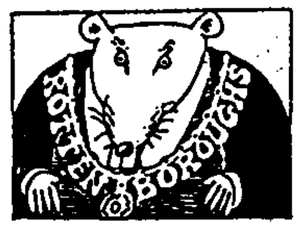
'New Muckspreader'

Old Macdonald


ALBERT
HOW DID YOU KNOW I WERE PISSED?
UNUSUAL DRIVING BEHAVIOUR MR MACDONALD!
POLICE
AN' WE SPOTTED YOU A MILE AWAY SON!
TRAVELIN' IN A STRAIGHT LINE WHILE IN CHARGE OF A J.C.B!



Rotten Borough Advertiser



CLEAN SWEEP FOR WANDSWORTH

MORE on the private street cleaner firm Onyx UK Ltd, which is being investigated by the fraud squad over its activities in Wandsworth, home of the Tory flagship council.

Council auditors found Onyx guilty of collecting trade refuse using men and lorries that were supposedly earmarked for council cleaning, and that the company mixed street rubbish with private waste to take advantage of the free council dump.

Onyx had also been contracted by the council to run a "blitz" crew to target bad rubbish areas. But instead of running a separate crew to tackle the trouble spots, Onyx diverted normal street cleaning vehicles from their duties to do the job.

Wandsworth's auditors were only asked to investigate after a member of the public complained to the fraud squad. Council inspectors had been aware of Onyx's misdemeanours for some time and had been reporting them to managers — including the amenity services manager Richard Hobbs who, coincidentally, had only recently joined the council from his post as a manager at, er, Onyx. Even more coincidentally it was Hobbs who drew up the contract for Onyx for Wandsworth's street cleaning, the contract he would later oversee.

The council, however, remains remarkably unperturbed by its street cleaners' extra-curricular activities. It demanded a paltry £3,000 to pay for the free use of the council tip, but asked for no money in return for the misuse of council resources on commercial jobs.

Perhaps Wandsworth councillors are unfazed because Onyx's contract is incredibly cheap. At the time the deal was signed local trade unionists urged the cleaners to join a union after they realised the contract could not possibly yield a profit for Onyx unless jobs were cut.

The unionists believed the firm's bid was £120,000 below break-even point. As the auditors have found, Onyx managers found unusual ways to cut corners, but now these have been uncovered enterprising Wandsworth has itself a real bargain of a contract.

IN BRIEF

HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM: Tory councillor Tony Glover has left the council after being investigated by social security officers for claiming income support while receiving thousands of pounds in council attendance allowances. Glover has not been charged with anything yet, but two days after department officials questioned him in mid December he quit his seat and no one in west London has seen him since.

HOUNSLOW: Aids charities have criticised Labour councillors over plans for a garden of remembrance after they applied to the national lottery for funds to help build a £1 million memorial to AIDs victims. It would include a herb and scented garden and a sculpture garden, and would cost the council £100,000 a year to run — money that could be better spent on research into the HIV virus, say the National AIDs and Terrence Higgins trusts.

CASTLE POINT: Two former Tory councillors, Malcolm Banagan and Bill Sharpe, have been admonished by the council's chief auditor after a contract to instal automatic toilets in the Essex borough was not put out to tender but went to their company, DWM Services. Banagan, who lost his seat in the May elections, was also reprimanded for failing to declare his interest in Castle Point Golf and Driving Range, which was involved in the council's own golf driving range. Four years ago Sharpe had a brush with golfing fame too when he sat on the recreation and amenities committee. It granted him a 25 year lease to use council-owned land as a golf range. Almost every other lease was granted annually.

AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SACK...

THERE is an embarrassing new scandal in Hackney where Colin Cornelius, a former town hall auditor, has won his appeal claiming unfair dismissal by the council.

Cornelius was sacked after discovering that a council worker had moved his family to Scotland in a council-owned van, had received hospitality from a kitchen furnishings company that won a £250,000 order from the council, and had sublet his council flat. Cornelius's mistake was that he did not trust council officers to tackle the misdemeanours properly (why ever not?) and so first approached his union for advice. Hackney used this as grounds for first suspending and then sacking him.

After an industrial tribunal found that Cornelius had indeed contributed to his sacking by going to his union with the allegations, he successfully appealed and heard a judge rule that his dismissal was "perverse and founded on corruption". The day Cornelius won his hearing the council sacked his sister, a town hall secretary.

● Sam Yeboah, the corruption-ridden council's self-styled "most senior African employee", is now history.

The former Reading bus conductor whose time as council personnel chief was marred by allegations of massive recruitment fraud involving illegal immigrants and staff appointed with bogus qualifications, is taking "early retirement" with a £50,000 golden handshake and a fat pension.

That should be the end of it, but it isn't. Yeboah, who hasn't been able to accept the reinstatement of housing director Bernard Crofton (who had been falsely charged with racism) is still pursuing a handful of claims against the authority. He has one against Crofton for racially harassing him; one very paranoid dispute against the councillors who voted for Crofton's reinstatement on grounds of, er, racism; and one against the council for refusing to defend him against stories run by the BBC and *Private Eye*.

LUCK OF THE IRISH CENTRE

IS a Westminster-style gerrymandering scandal about to emerge in Bent, run by the Tories with a huge one-seat majority?

In one particular seat, marginal Cricklewood, both the district auditor and Inspector Knacker have been looking closely at allegations that the Tories won the seat illegitimately.

Just before the 1994 elections, cash-starved Bent agreed to hand the local Irish Centre a £137,000 grant for "vital" refurbishment work — ie installation of a new bar. The council put up the money, no questions asked, and the Irish Centre put out an election leaflet urging its many members to vote Tory. Cricklewood's population is 40 per cent Irish related, and the Tories duly won the seat by 400 votes.

Cleverly the auditor spotted a link in these events, and the ensuing inquiry has established that council leaders misspent public money approving the six-figure grant. The auditor has also rubbished the council's own inquiry into the matter as "inadequate and not as thorough as it should have been". Bent leader Bob Blackman, selected for the parliamentary seat of Bedford, will now have to fend off some difficult questions from would-be constituents.

LIBRARY CORNER

THIS year is supposed to be Birmingham's Year of Life-long Learning, so city librarians have been told to shut up about threatened library closures.

To save money the council drew up plans to close 18 of the city's 41 libraries. Sensibly it has decided to hold off for this year but has warned that the cuts might be implemented over the next two to three years.

The region's librarians are not convinced by the assurances for 1996. Last year Rednal library was promised that it had been saved from closure — shortly before staff received their dismissal notices.

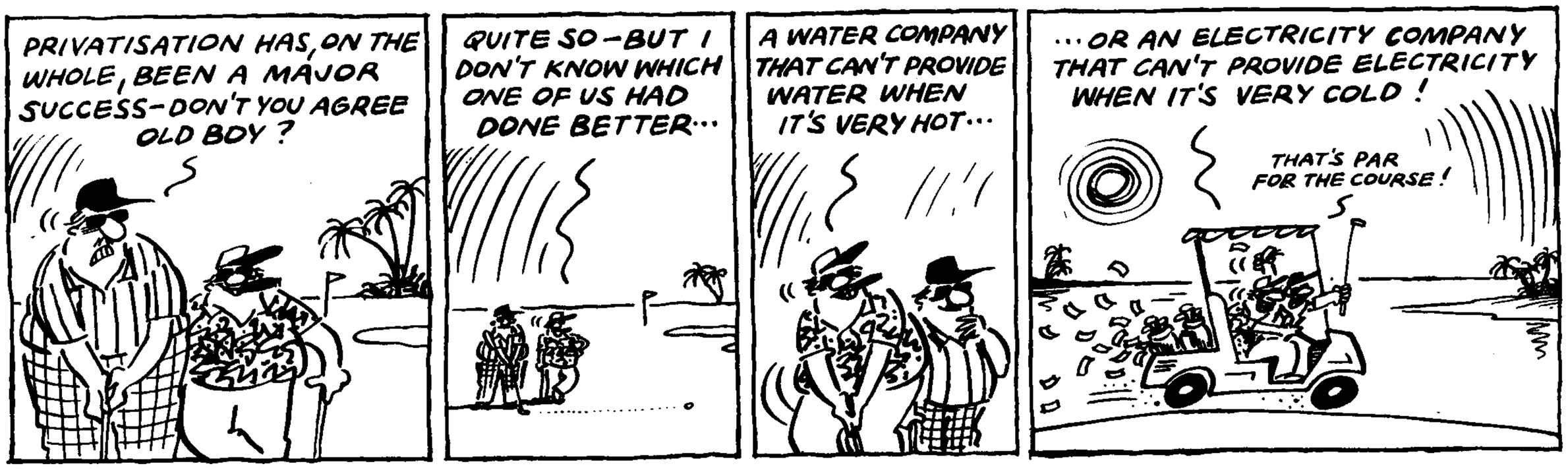
PS: City councillors have awarded themselves a budget-busting £3,000 pay-rise.

RED FACE OF THE WEEK

THERE is so much crime in Peckham, south London, that the government agreed to fund the One Stop Crime Shop, where locals can receive advice, buy security devices or grass up their neighbours. The head of the shop, Judy Best, has an expert knowledge of police procedures — especially since she was recently arrested and charged with drink driving and assaulting a police officer.

THE DIRECTORS

DREDGE


PRIVATISATION HAS, ON THE WHOLE, BEEN A MAJOR SUCCESS - DON'T YOU AGREE OLD BOY ?
QUITE SO - BUT I DON'T KNOW WHICH ONE OF US HAD DONE BETTER...
A WATER COMPANY THAT CAN'T PROVIDE WATER WHEN IT'S VERY HOT...
...OR AN ELECTRICITY COMPANY THAT CAN'T PROVIDE ELECTRICITY WHEN IT'S VERY COLD !
THAT'S PAR FOR THE COURSE !

SIGNAL FAILURES

RAILTRACK has been given the go-ahead to increase track access charges by £84 million in the coming year despite the regulator's promise a year ago that access charges would be strictly capped.

Nine million pounds of the increase is to cover "extra costs that Railtrack can expect to incur in carrying out its investment programme given that it will have to pay compensation to train operators in respect of some of the possessions [closures of lines for engineering work] it takes".

The other £75 million covers compensation to be paid by Railtrack to the operators if its performance does not meet the regulator's standards, which are pitched above current performance levels. In other words, train operators will be giving Railtrack millions of pounds which Railtrack will then hand back to them, ostensibly as "compensation" for disruption caused by Railtrack. Train operators will, of course, have to pay Railtrack the full amount for any delays attributable to their trains (see *Eye* 889).

LATE last year a pre-privatisation adjustment saw Railtrack's capital reduced from £800,050,000 to £50,000. "It's purely to satisfy people who will hold shares in the company that there are adequate reserves to pay dividends," explained a Railtrack spokesman.

Three weeks later — and four days after a high court legal notice broke the news in the *Times* — the MP Gwyneth Dunwoody asked a parliamentary question about Railtrack finances. John Watts, minister for roads and rail, replied: "No decisions have yet been taken on the appropriate capital structure for Railtrack when it is privatised." Really?

The purpose of the £800 million shuffle is to write off £800 million of losses which, cancelled by the device of revaluation, presumably of property, create an equivalent profit. A company can't pay a dividend if its losses exceed it reserves. Clear, isn't it?

THE benefit of privatisation for passengers in Airedale, West Yorkshire, is a fleet of trains so old they sometimes explode.

When the lines were electrified between Leeds, Skipton, Bradford and Ilkley last year, their eight-year-old diesel trains were replaced with 35-year-old cast offs from Network SouthEast.

An order for new purpose-built electric trains was abruptly halted specifically because privatisation brought too many financial imponderables into the equation. Now train drivers are refusing to drive the old bangers unless they have much more frequent inspections to reduce the risk of another explosion like the one which recently ripped doors off a train in Leeds station.

STAGECOACH, the new private operator of South West Trains, is a keen believer in understanding what the customer wants

Accordingly, executive director Brian Cox has already decided that nobody from the enormous Stagecoach group will be available to address the 18th national conference of rail users in London in October. Only two others have previously refused to address this annual conference: rail franchising director Roger Salmon; and, when he was a transport minister, nice Michael Portillo.

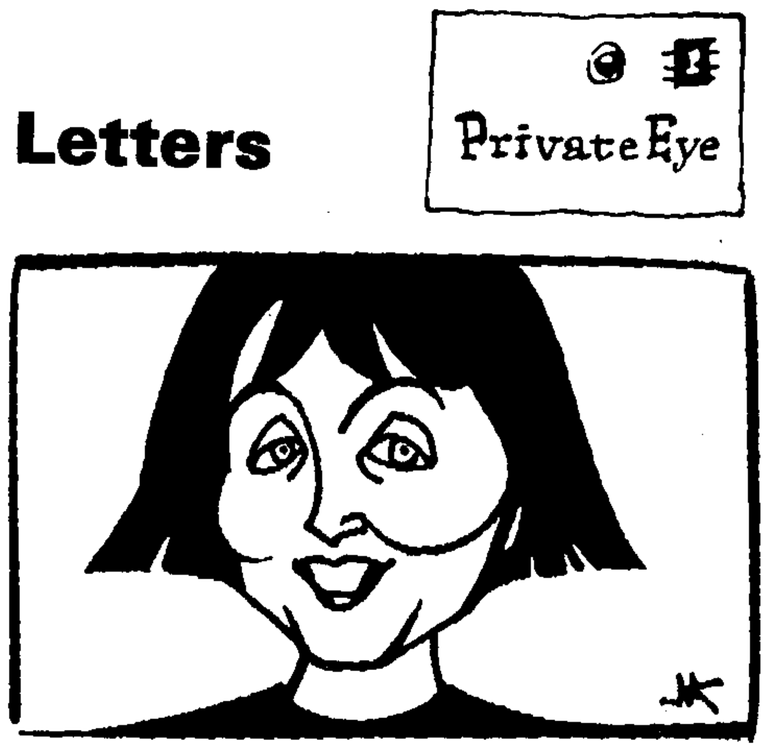
'Dr B. Ching'

Private I-I-I!

THIS ISSUE'S rundown of the nation's most self-obsessed columnists, based on the number of incidences of the word "I" per column-inch.

		Ego Rating
1	Anna Blundy (Times 3/2)	3.20
2	Zoe Heller (ST 4/2)	2.92
3	Alistair Beaton (D. Tel. 3/2)	1.93
4	Jeffrey Bernard (Spectator 3/2)	1.92
5	C.J. Stone (Big Issue, Feb)	1.60
6	Jane Proctor (ST 4/2)	1.58
7	Michael Winner (NotW 4/2)	1.43
8	Charles Moore (D. Tel. 1/2)	1.35
9=	Gerald Kaufman (D. Tel 2/2)	1.24
9=	Mike Phillips (Ind 29/1)	1.24

Letters



Anagram

Sir,

It is easy to understand why Harriet Harman did not become Harriet Dromey when she married.

Jack Dromey's TGWU colleagues might have spotted that "He Married Tory" (anag).

KIM THONGER,
Lathbury, Buckinghamshire.

A hem line

Sir,

We were all amused to read of my pre-Christmas shopping exploits in the latest issue of the EYE. *Doubtlessly, the story entertained your many readers too — but it was factually wrong in almost every respect. At the time, I was braving below-freezing temperatures on holiday in Scotland. Absolutely no amusement value there I'm afraid. And no skimpy mini dresses either.*

Yours faithfully,
"LA" SPENCER,
Guardian Newspapers Limited.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Ms Spencer was indeed in Scotland — so* OBSERVER *editor Andrew Jaspan's wife's Christmas present had to be bought by one of Ms Spencer's junior fashion assistants instead.*

Coal de-bunker

Sir,

The item about Jon Trickett in your 26 January issue was rather unfair. Leeds city council would have acted illegally if it had bought English coal in preference to Colombian coal because section 17 of the local government act 1988 (a fine piece of Tory legislation) makes it illegal to consider the country of origin in a local authority supply contract — it must buy the cheapest.

Yours faithfully,
PAUL TURNER,
Cambridge.

Grease balls

Sir,

Look here shit-head. How do you manage to get so many things wrong in one fucking article?

Some romantic approached Mohamed Al Fayed and suggested that he should take over the NEW STATESMAN. *Mohamed asked my opinion. I told him that it wasn't right for him and he wasn't right for it. He agreed.*

I planned no boardroom putsch at the STATESMAN, *I just wanted to get rid of the editor because I thought he was bloody useless and there were much better candidates.*

I've been to Quaglino's once. I thought it was crap. Somebody else paid so I don't know how much it cost.

As for lifestyle, I leave worrying about that sort of tosh to television personalities and their like.

Oily enough for you?

Yours,
BRIAN BASHAM,
London NW3.

Role models

Sir,

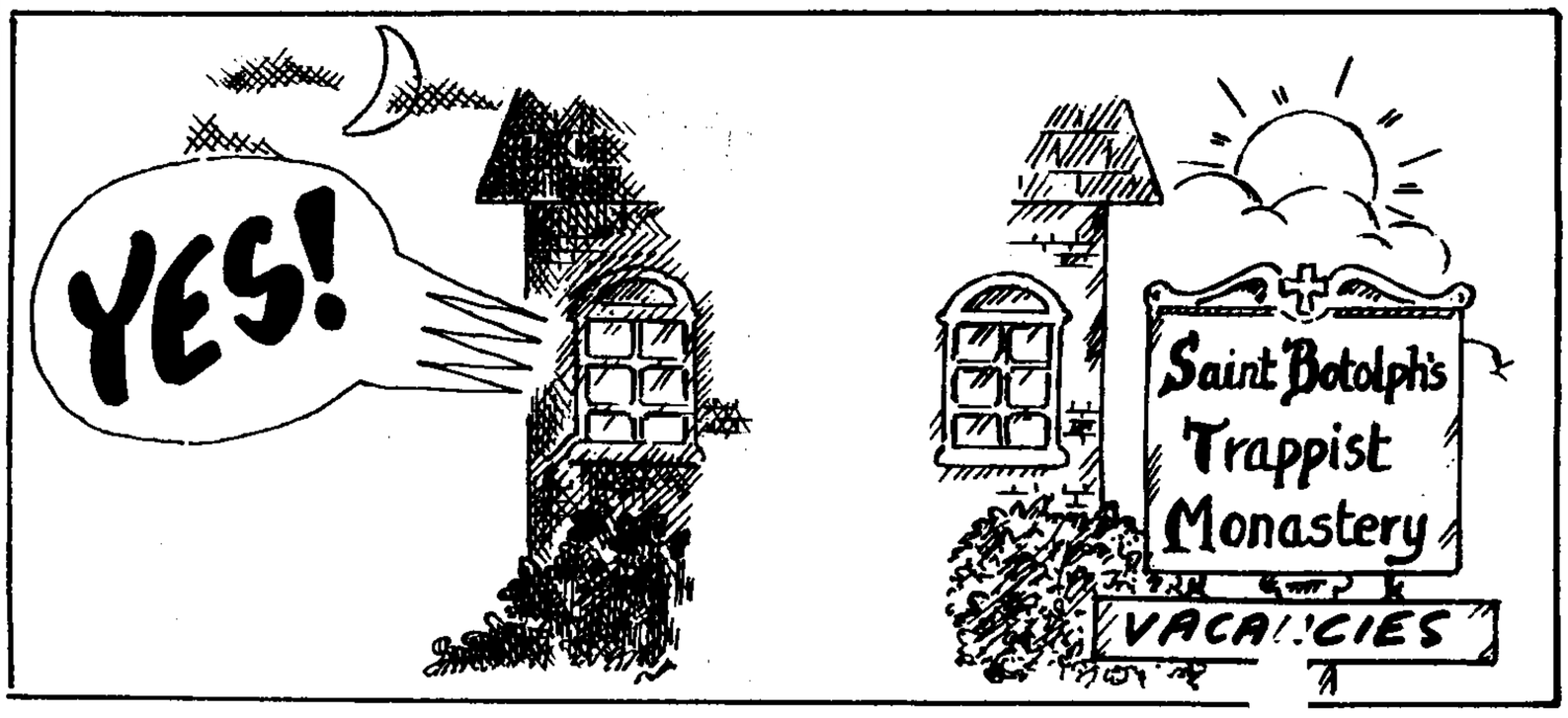
I am researching the history of the Renault Clio advertisement and the subsequent rise to mediocrity of "Papa and Nicole". I understand that you have in your possession a photograph of another couple originally considered for the parts. However, despite their photogenic appearance and sophisticated attire, they were rejected for the parts as the very great difference in their respective ages made them unbelievable as a father and his daughter.

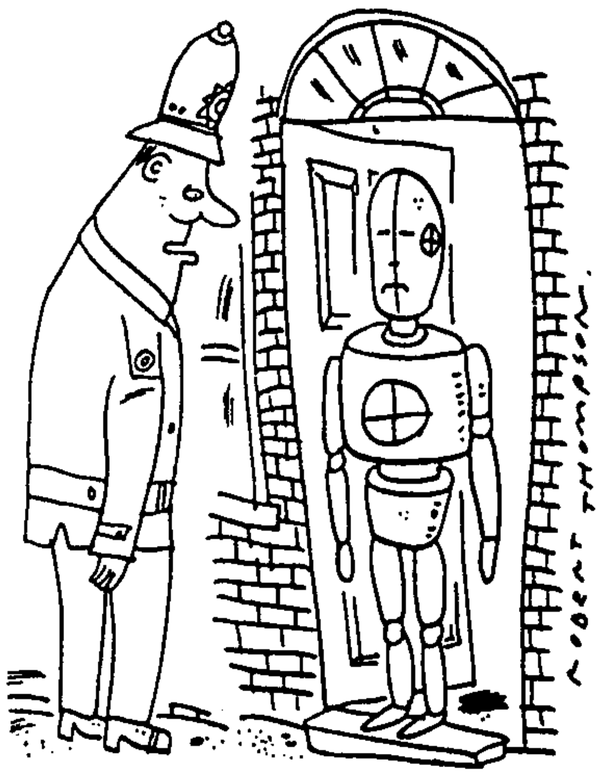
I would be grateful if you could reprint this picture to help with my research.

Yours faithfully,
NICK COLE,
Wembley, Middlesex.

The Lottery Winners

TURNER





"It's your husband – he's been involved in an accident"

Tip the balance

Sir,

Why all the fuss over "uranium tipped shells"?

They are common knowledge so not much could have been "revealed" except to the totally ignorant.

The idea is to penetrate the armour of enemy tanks as far away as possible so the enemy dies and not our tank crews. Besides, in a "Big One" there would be plenty of other radioactive material around and at least someone's found a use for the stuff which would otherwise end up in NIREX's safe (?) hands.

Of course some may yearn for the good old days of 1944 when our crews fired environmentally friendly shells which unfortunately had a tendency to go ping when they hit German tanks, thus costing lots of Allied lives and THAT *is what I call a scandal.*

Yours,
IAN J. LACEY,
BFPO 451.

Inside out

Sir,

Your magazine's reputation for fearless and truthful journalism is badly tarnished when it attacks people for being concerned about the local environment and the welfare of their neighbours: ROTTEN BOROUGHS, EYE *890. "Snotty Maida Vale residents", you tell us, have only complained about Clarendon Court because they are worried about property prices. The wording of our petition was as follows:*

"This fine building, occupying a landmark site, is becoming increasingly dilapidated; we are dismayed at the growing contrast between Clarendon Court and its surrounding area. If the inside of the building is anything like its outside we are most concerned for the well-being of its residents."

I can only conclude that your reporter did not bother to research the article. In any case, if it is "snotty" to want to maintain an attractive neighbourhood and preserve an area's character, your own Piloti column should be made redundant. The truth of the matter is that it was 442 local people, supported by their Conservative councillors, who brought this matter to Westminster city council's attention. The local Labour party have hijacked the issue for their own publicity purposes, but never attended residents' meetings. I understand that the council, which is not responsible for placing refugees in Clarendon Court but is required by law to pay their rent, has restricted benefit payments to the owners and is negotiating for immediate improvements.

MRS PIP RAYMOND-COX,
Chairman, Douglas House & Aubrey House Tenants Association.

You can't win them all

Sir,

I wish to complain most bitterly about your forthcoming crossword rollover double jackpot prize of £200. This sum is obscene. Surely no single crossword winner needs such a vast amount of money. Me and all my friends in the pubs hereabouts and all the local taxi drivers reckon that your prizes should be smaller and spread around more. I have written to the local bishop about this matter and I'm sure he agrees with our sentiments. Any day now I expect him to appear on the JIMMY YOUNG SHOW *to denounce your promotion of greed and selfishness. And who cares if he says that hell doesn't exist?*

Yours,
SVEN LOGG,
Southampton.

Asylum seeker

Sir,

Piloti of Nooks & Corners obviously has no experience of the old psychiatric hospitals.

Many of the "water tower" psychiatric hospitals are indeed magnificent buildings and the grounds are often very beautiful. However, the buildings were sited in the countryside miles from anywhere, not because it would be peaceful for the patients but so society could forget them and so "ordinary" people didn't have to see them.

The idea that these old asylums "provided a humane sanctuary" for "the mentally ill" is utter rubbish. What they provided was a disgraceful and degrading environment where people were denied basic human rights and where they were often locked up, subject to severe over-medication, assault, ECT on tap and lobotomies and other frightening and dangerous "treatments".

Thankfully care in the community is making us look again at services for people with mental health difficulties. More resources are needed to fund community care properly but the "mentally ill" must never again be locked away out of sight and out of mind.

Many crimes have been committed over the years in the name of psychiatry. The old psychiatric hospitals were not "sanctuaries" but were for many frightening and cruel institutions. I know. I was a patient. And yes the trees were beautiful. But the staff and the buildings were quite, quite ugly.

Yours faithfully,
GEORGES TURLE,
Romney Marsh, Kent.

Lookalike

Paul Merton

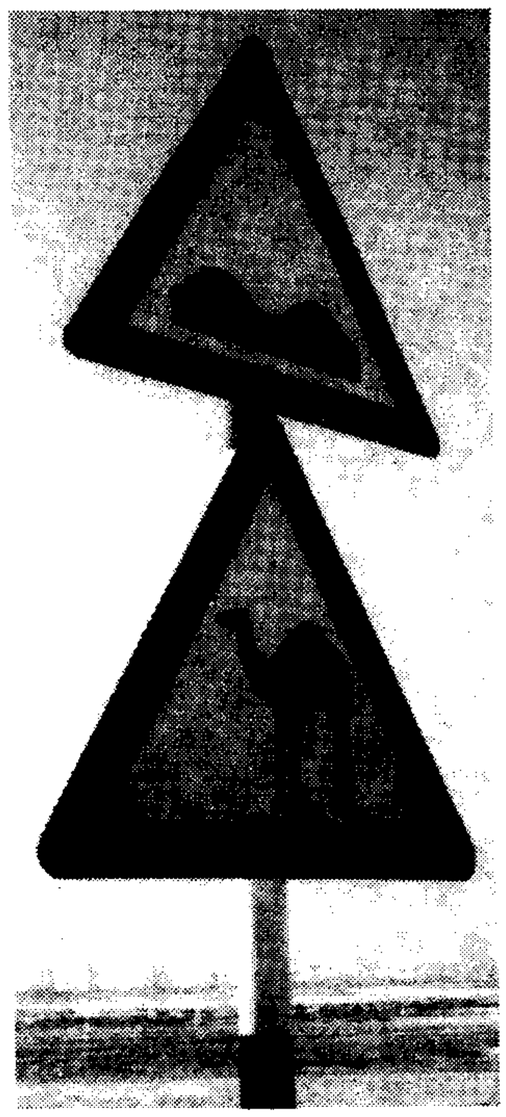
Ann Widdecombe

Sir,

Have any of your readers noticed the remarkable resemblance between prisons minister Ann Widdecombe, and the amusing comedian/actor Paul Merton?

Could they by any chance be related?

Yours sincerely,
DAVID JENKINS,
Avonmouth, Bristol.



I-Spy

Dubai

Submitted by Tim Harrison. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

F-off

Sir,

Where the fucking fuck have the Tarantino cartoons gone?

Yours,
TED HUNTER,
London SE23.

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"Sean Pollock there, a carbon copy of his dad. Except he's a bit taller and he's got red hair."

TREVOR BAILEY, Radio 4
(Richard Bean)

"Unfortunately, we keep kicking ourselves in the foot."

RAY WILKINS, BBC1
(Paul Marshall)

"England might now be the favourites to draw this match."

VIC MARKS, Radio 4
(Chris Bennett)

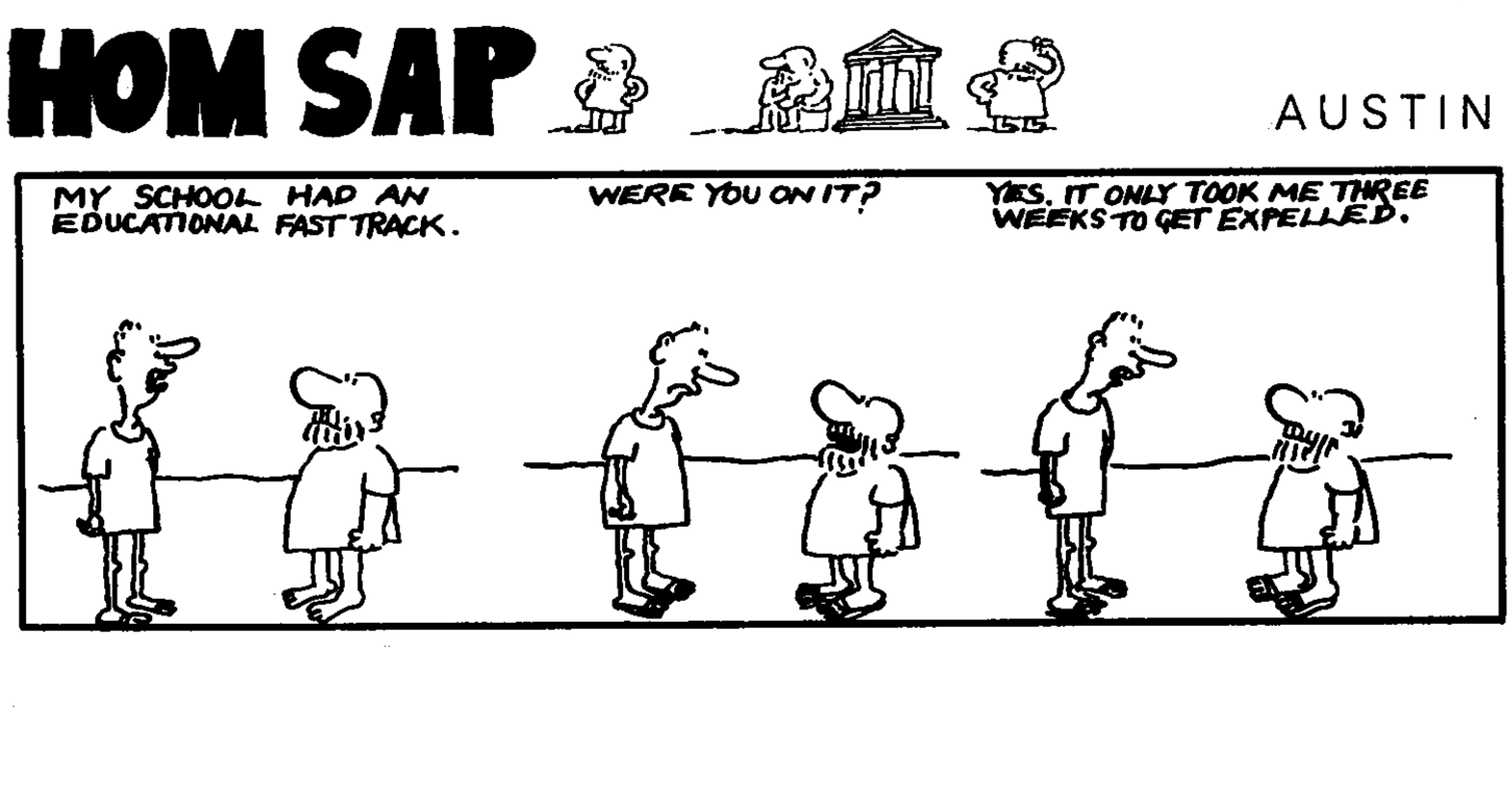
"The tackles are coming in thick and thin now."

ALAN BRAZIL, Radio 5
(Andrew Prestwich)

Gaby Roslin: *Pete, tell me your name — just your first name.*

Contestant: *Pete.*

The Big Breakfast, Channel 4
(Mike Robinson)



FUNNY OLD WORLD

COMPILED BY

Victor Lewis-Smith

"It's the way he would have wanted to go," Richard Thompson told a coroner's court in Melbourne. "Neil always wanted to be a fish, and his dream finally came true."

Earlier, Thompson had told the coroner how the deceased man, Neil Watson from Toolondo, Victoria, had developed his odd craving. "He'd talked about it for years, and I often saw him out at the reservoir, down at the water's edge, swinging from a rope and pretending to be a fish. Then, about a month ago, he showed me a fish-shaped body suit he'd designed for himself out of a piece of heavy green plastic sheeting. It had bits of rubber cut from Wellington boots, and a rubber hoop which he manipulated to look just like gulping fish lips. He'd cut out two holes for his eyes, and it had fins and a tail, and everything. He used to put the suit on and sit in his bath, but I never thought he'd jump into the reservoir wearing it.

"When we found him, he'd suffocated. It's tragic. He'd forgotten to put in any ventilation slits for his mouth and nose. I think he actually thought he'd be able to breathe underwater like a fish, but he couldn't, because he wasn't really a fish. Still, that's just like Neil. He always was madcap. And, well, frankly a little bit retarded." *(Angling Times, 3/1/96 Spotter — Simon Dean)*

— o —

"So anyway, I opened the soup can and found soup inside," Tom Cummins told reporters outside his home in Austin, Texas. "Soup. Then it dawned on me. My life is in ruins, and I don't mean I'm an archaeologist. I mean, I'm a dead man. Give to charity? Stuff it. Never again. One good deed and I'm over $70,000 out of pocket."

Cummins, a colour film processor at a local electronics company, explained what had happened to him a week earlier. "I was watching TV just before Christmas, and they were talking about a charity food drive, collecting canned food to give to homeless people. My wife Trixie and I cried as we watched. We'd had a few drinks and immediately started gathering most of the tins we had in the kitchen, drove them down to the depot,

and handed them over. I'd forgotten all about it until yesterday, when we were getting ready for a toga party and Trixie asked me to get her diamond necklace. So I picked up the fake Campbell's soup can where we keep our valuables and tried to open it. I couldn't twist the top off, but at first I just thought it was rusty, so I used a can opener to open the lid. But inside there was only Scotch Broth. I remember saying to Trixie 'I don't feel too good,' just before I passed out. I phoned the police, but they said there's nothing they can do, because no crime had been committed and warned me that using foul language over the phone was an offence. They then charged me for spraying the legend 'robbing cheating scum' over the windows of the insurance company. They won't pay up, because they say I threw the jewels away myself. And my Trixie has left me to start a new life running a cattery in Dallas. I don't know where she got the cash from."

Police later confirmed that they wish to interview a homeless Austin man in his sixties who recently received a food parcel and was last heard of booking a flight to the Bahamas. *(Austin Herald, 29/12/95. Spotter — Brendan Joseph O'Byrne)*

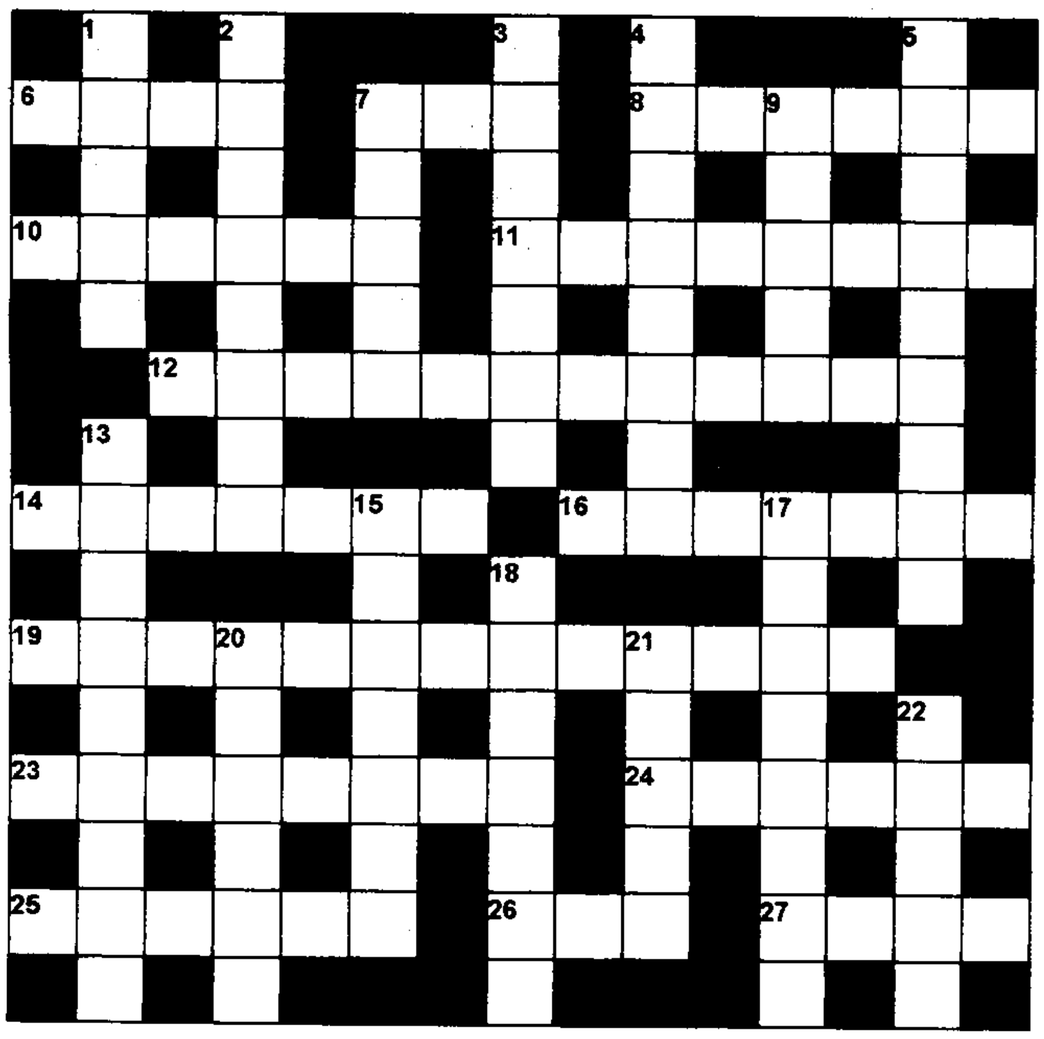
— o —

"Give us non-cancer packs... we want non-cancer packs now!" shouted a group of protesting farm workers outside a tobacconist's in Eastern Cape. Their spokesman, Hiddi Marhubi, told news reporters: "We will not buy a packet that says 'Danger: Smoking Can Kill You'. Give us safe packets now."

A South African television reporter later confirmed that scenes like these have become common throughout the Eastern Cape in recent weeks, since the government decided to adopt statutory health warnings on all cigarette packets. "The irate farm workers are demanding the return of the unmarked packs that they used to be able to buy before the health warnings were added, because they think those weren't lethal. Tobacconists report that these workers absolutely refuse to buy the new packs with 'Smoking Causes Cancer' or 'The More You Smoke, The Sooner You'll Die' printed on them. Even sales of packets reading 'Smoking Can Cause Low Birth Weight' have plummeted, although some of the men are prepared to risk smoking those packs." (Business Day [Johannesburg], 22/11/95. Spotter — Graeme Read)

EYE CROSSWORD 46 by Cyclops

£100 Winner BARRIE McDONAGH



ACROSS

6 Mark's lover a familiar old queen (4)
7 Couple can be seen by all getting poked in party (3)
8 (see 17)
10 This country, according to its people, is a vessel in a stormy sea (6)
11 The little darlings point and then piss on hampers (8)
12/26/23 Love-lies-bleeding an apt sort of floral tribute for its victims? (2,10,3,8)
14 Apply expertise to Brenda and you'll have a ball (7)
16 Successful shaggers, they reckon (7)
19 Intercourse consisting of which is meaningless between lovers (5,8)
23 (see 12)
24 Is supposed to make you randy, having been hoisted out of bed? (6)
25 Philanderers screwing first long to be held (6)
26 (see 12)
27 Squeeze, we hear, as a token of love (4)

DOWN

1 (see 4)
2 Idealist Norma's terrible affliction (8)
3 Messed up, confusing love with lust — needs some education (7)
4/1 Daily joy of a harmonious union? (8,5)
5 Sort of payment that gets Roy new appendage (9)
7 State drops fashionable hospital visitor (5)
9 To enter into the horseplay get a mattress (5)
13 Friendly missiles, Peter? Cobblers! (9)
15 They're short of tackle, but energy leads peacekeepers on such manoeuvres (7)
17/8 Hitches are common in this public institution (8,6)
18 Is present from new date in bad taste? (7)
20 Clinch is stimulant to promiscuous nurse (6)
21 Blair on youth — spot the mockery (5)
22 Some love insatiably — they're all over your body (5)

£200 prize to first correct solution opened on 16.2.96. Entries to "Crossword", Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG.

Solution to Crossword No. 45

ACROSS: 7 Charisma 9 On heat 10 Unison 11 Lynch mob 12 It Could Be You 14 Analyst 16 Screw up 19 Back to Basics 23 Frottage 24 Nausea 25 Sum up 26 Dutch cap.

DOWN: 1 Think-tank 2 Fresco 3 Wallaby 4 Johnny 5 The House 6 (See 22) 8 Singles 13 Muscleman 15 Lobotomy 17 Cabinet 18 Attends 20 Crappy 21 Slushy 22/6 Press baron.

The winner of Eye Crossword 44 was Michael Robinson and, not, as we stated, Jeremy Doyle. Sincere apologies to both gentlemen.

SCOTT NEARS JOURNEY'S END

by Our Polar Staff **Lunchtime O'Ates**

THE INTREPID High Court Judge, Scott of the Inquiry, is at last reaching his goal after 3½ years of wading through some of the most boring paperwork known to man in conditions of "extreme hostility".

But during the final days, as he struggled on bicycle towards his target of telling everyone what they knew already, Scott was set upon by a crazed sheep-like creature known as The Abominable Howe-Man.

"It was frightening," he said, "This terrible vision loomed up and accused me of being unfair to him by only allowing him 3 weeks to come up with some plausible lies *(shurely 'tell his side of the story'? Ed.)*."

Presley Bicycle QC

But Scott is undeterred and is determined to press on despite the fact that hundreds of journalists have got there before him.

Said Scott, "I am coming out now and it may take some time to read."

The Scott Report is 6,000 pages long.

CHILD BRIDE SARAH FLIES IN

by Our Social Affairs Staff **Turki Theodorocokupthenos**

A GIRL with a mental age of 13 flew back to Britain today announcing that she would no longer be married.

Known only as Sarah X, she was briefly and controversially wed to an unemployed naval officer called Andru Windsos, 45.

But now Essex girl Sarah is being forced to come home from her permanent holiday abroad in order to appear in *Hello!* magazine *(shurely 'court'? Ed.)* to answer charges of being "a wonderful mother, a slim role-model, and a successful businesswoman".

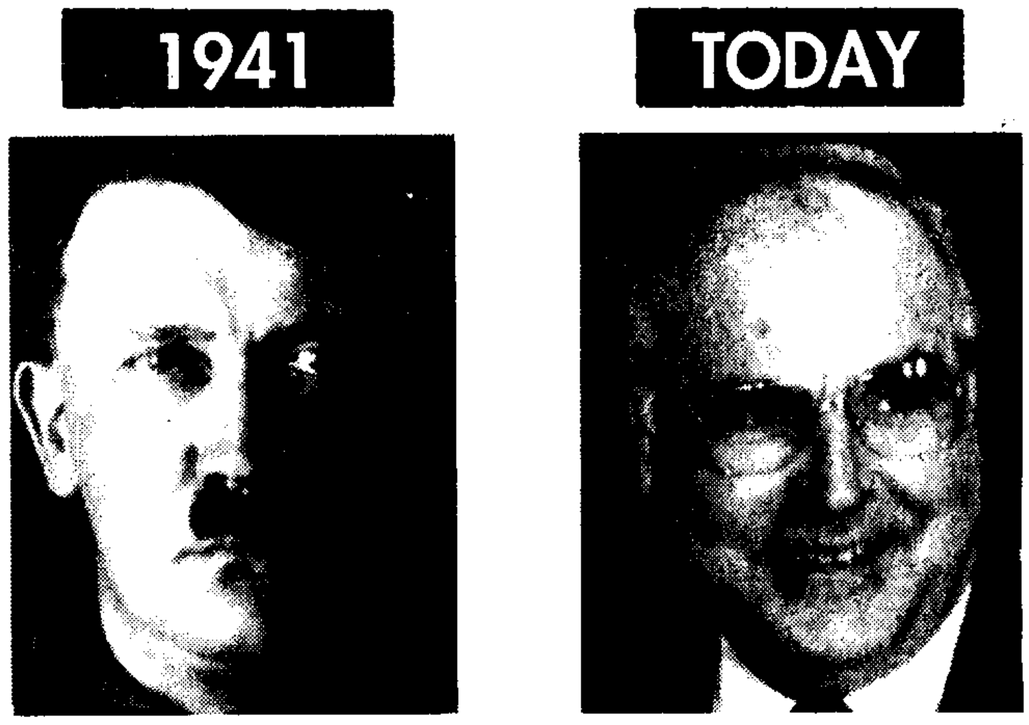
Es-Sex Girl

Sarah's father, speaking from his massage club in the heart of London's Soho,

"Sarah is a sensible girl who has been led astray by an irresponsible, sex-crazed older man, ie myself... I mean, this Andros character."

Sarah X is 36 stone.

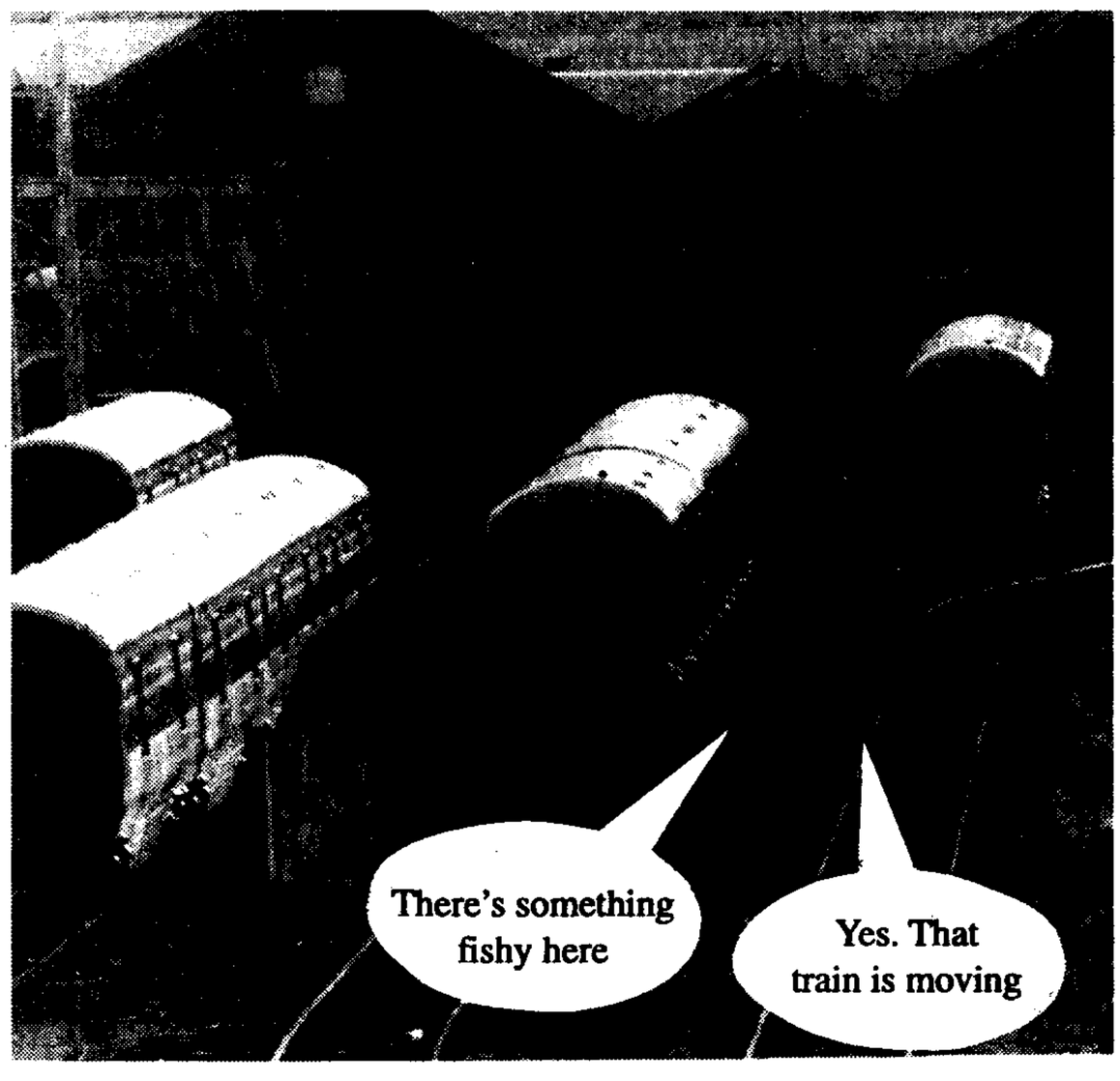
Then and Now



"Wait for ze slowest ship in ze convoy. Heh! Heh! Heh!"

"Don't wait for ze slowest ship in ze convoy. Heh! Heh! Heh!"

FRAUD SQUAD MOVE ON RAIL OPERATOR



Pick of the Week
with Punch's Sheridan Morley — The Man You Can't Wake Up

Trainspotting

New cult film about Glaswegians taking hallucinatory drugs. Some of them inject so much heroin that they end up believing that they have seen a train arriving at a station.

RATING: Not to be missed. Unlike all the trains.

EDUCATION ROW — MP SLAMMED FOR HYPOCRISY

by Our Classroom Staff **Jane Thykke**

A CONSERVATIVE member of parliament yesterday emerged at the centre of a new storm over so-called "hypocrisy".

Michael Greyman (Estuary East) was accused by the Labour party of "blatant double-standards" over his decision to send his son to a state school (Estuary Secondary).

"This is outrageous", said Labour front bencher Harriet Harman. "His party has a policy of total non-interest in State education. And yet there he is unashamedly sending his son to the local comprehensive."

Mr Greyman tried to argue that it was a matter of personal conscience and that he would not be forced into the politically correct decision of sending his son to St Cakes.

Class War

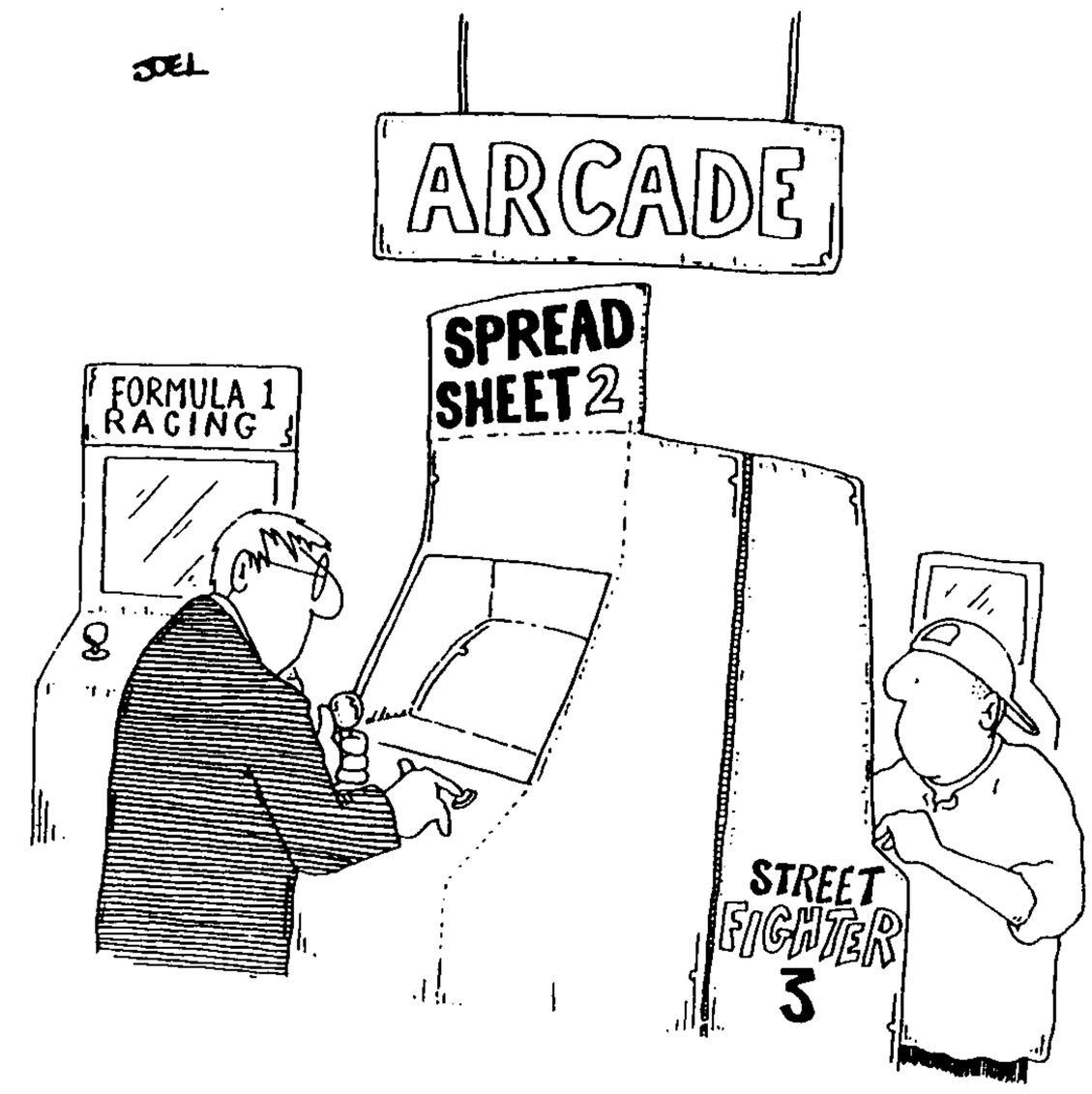
Labour, however, were not to be satisfied, demanding that Mr Greyman should prove his lack of commitment to the State sector by withdrawing his son immediately from Estuary Secondary and packing him off to boarding school at once.

"The Tories have proved once again," said Tony Blair, "that they are completely inconsistent when it comes to Education Policy. They get my vote!!"

St Olave is 973.

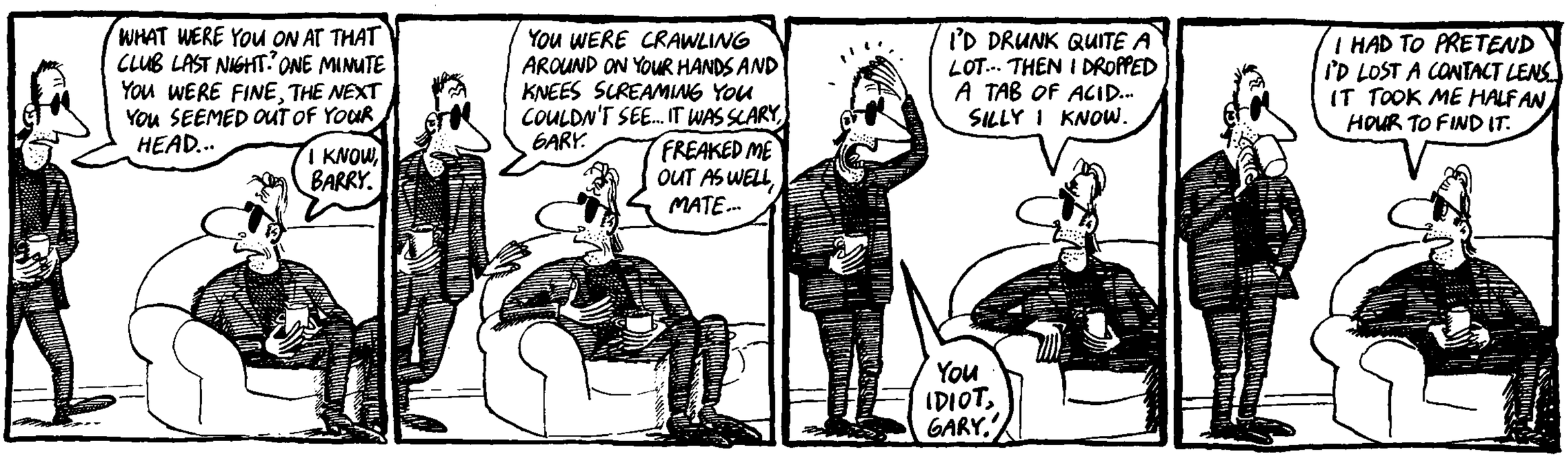
Great Bores Of Today.

"... all the upright planks are marked 'D' right they are over there and the shorter planks with the laminated outside edges must be the shelves and they're marked 'C' and there are six of them hang on there's only five oh I see that's the strut which is 'J' well where are the bolts for that? it says 'wingnuts X, Y and Z fit onto screws 2, 4 and 9' but there's only one packet of those look in the box yes I know you've looked look again we've laid all the pieces out but I can't begin 'the assembly stage' without the bolts I *have* read the instructions thank you and I'm telling you that you cannot fix the bevelled edges into the angle joints as they stand you need the bolts what the hell is a willow-clip? there isn't one of those this is hopeless no it's not my fault, you wanted this and I said I'd put it together I didn't say I could read Swedish which most of it seems to be written in personally I think it looked terrible in the showroom anyway wait a minute these are the bolts these black things and that's not a nut it's a willow-clip oh I see..."



Celeb

LIGGER


WHAT WERE YOU ON AT THAT CLUB LAST NIGHT? ONE MINUTE YOU WERE FINE, THE NEXT YOU SEEMED OUT OF YOUR HEAD...
I KNOW, BARRY.
YOU WERE CRAWLING AROUND ON YOUR HANDS AND KNEES SCREAMING YOU COULDN'T SEE... IT WAS SCARY, GARY.
FREAKED ME OUT AS WELL, MATE...
I'D DRUNK QUITE A LOT... THEN I DROPPED A TAB OF ACID... SILLY I KNOW.
YOU IDIOT, GARY!
I HAD TO PRETEND I'D LOST A CONTACT LENS... IT TOOK ME HALF AN HOUR TO FIND IT.

The Secret Diary of John Major aged 47¾

Monday

At last, as I have been saying all along, we are certain to win the next election! Labour has made the most monumental blunder in the whole history of politics. The way ahead is now clear for me to win my record fifth election victory in a row. The incredible scandal which has gripped everyone in the nation involved one of Mr Blair's very closest friends, a lady MP called Mrs Harman, who, believe it or not, has sent her son to a grammar school. "Good for her," said my wife Norman. "He will have a good start in life, like you did. He might even end up being prime minister, especially as he is Labour." As usual, she completely missed the point.

Tuesday

Today I totally trounced Mr Blair in the House of Commons. This is the third time in a row that I have made him look ridiculous. Even the Daily Mail, which is normally a Labour paper, said that I was brilliant and that the Labour Party was finished. At Question Time he asked me about the timetable for railway privatisation, and quick as a flash I replied: "Why is Mrs Harman sending her son to a grammar school?" Our side stood up and cheered for 10 minutes. Everyone agreed that it was my finest ever performance in Parliament.

Wednesday

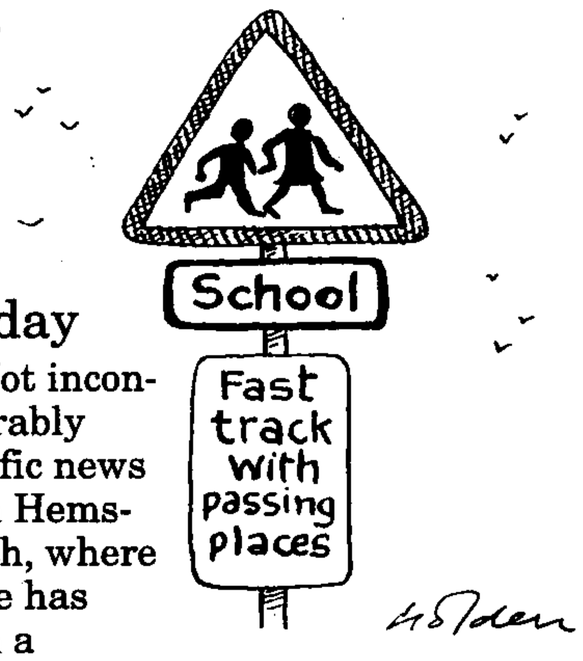
We are merciless in our attacks on Mr Blair! Mr Heseltine in his daily appearance with Mr Humphrys on the Today programme said that Mr Blair was "the criminals' friend". "Just like you and Mr Asil Nadir," said Norma, as usual being unhelpful. "No," I said. "The statistics show that crime under my government has fallen. That means that anyone who is against my government is a friend of the criminals." It is lucky I went to a grammar school, like Mrs Harman's son, so I can understand these simple logical points!

Thursday a.m.

I'm afraid that Mr Clinton's friend, Mr Senator Mitchell, has completely failed to understand the problems of Northern Ireland. He has said that it is perfectly alright for Mr Gerry Adams to take over Northern Ireland without having to give up his weapons and that talks about this should go ahead at once. I have come up with a brilliant compromise idea which will keep the peace process going. "We will have an election," I told the Cabinet. They all went white, until I explained that I didn't mean here but in Northern Ireland.

Thursday p.m.

Mr Adams does not like my idea because he thinks that he will not get any votes. Mr Bruton does not like my idea either, because he thinks that if Mr Adams doesn't get any votes he won't either in his elections. Mr Clinton has also come out against my idea because if the other two don't get any votes, then there won't be any in it for him in his election, which was the only point of the peace process anyway. Thank goodness I don't have to worry about winning my election because, thanks to Mrs Harman sending her son to a grammar school, I have already won.



Friday

Not inconsiderably terrific news from Hemsworth, where there has been a by-election! We have confounded the sceptics and retained our deposit.

What is even better, the Labour Party has been split by Mr Scargill's New Labour Party. Labour got only 16,000 — *well* down on the projected 16,100. And Mr Scargill got 2,000 votes — well up on the projected 3,000!

As Mr Mawhinney said, it was certainly a great day for us. He told me that Conservative MPs are now so confident that we will win the next election that 52 of them are leaving on the grounds that I can win perfectly well without them. Oh yes.

Saturday

I am in no small measure annoyed with Mr Herr Kohl who has criticised me for going too slowly in the fast lane while he is coming up behind me in his BMW flashing his lights and shouting: "For you, English Johnny, ze European Union is over!"

He even said that unless we all unite in a Federal Europe there will be war.

"Will you be flying to Munich to see him?" asked my wife Norman, showing very little knowledge of German geography.

"The capital of Germany is Brussels," I told her, "as everyone knows. That is where Mr Herr Kohl lives with his friend Mr Monsieur Mitterrand who is dead."

"He is not the only one," she said as we ate our Marks & Spencer Balti House Executive Cucumber Soup in front of the television news.

NO EVIDENCE FOR FAT BORE SYNDROME SAYS SOAMES

by Our Medical Staff **Lunchtime O'Bese**

THE MINISTER For Denying That Anyone Has Ever Suffered From Chemical Poisoning, Mr Nicholas Soames, was last night in action again.

He denied that there was any evidence of the sickness known as Fat Bore Syndrome.

Doctors have claimed that years of exposure to huge lunches, followed by long afternoons asleep in the House of Commons, had rendered Mr Soames physically and mentally absurd.

"He is incapable of even the simplest thought processes," said one expert who examined him.

"He spends all his time just sitting round in studios, staring vacantly into television cameras, repeating again and again the same simple phrases: 'There is no evidence, there is no evidence. Table for two at Wilton's.' "

Mr Soames is 98 stone.

Poetry Corner

In Memoriam: Lines On The Retirement Of Sir Richard 'Dickie' Bird

So. Farewell then
Dickie Bird.

Famous umpire.

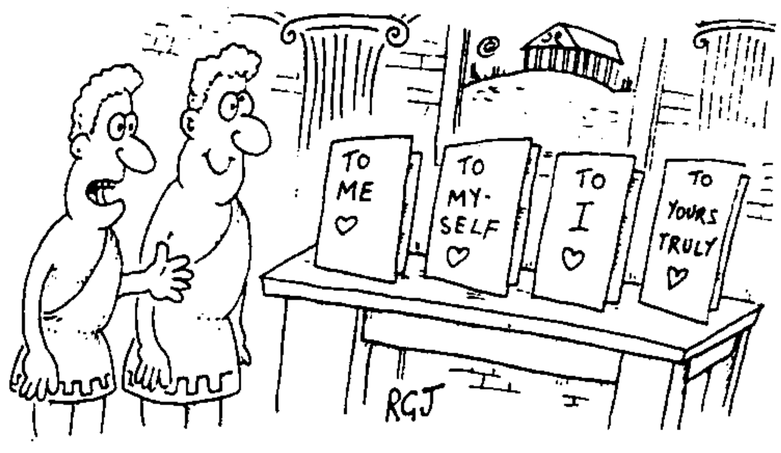
With your white coat
And your
Cap.

You were a familiar figure
To cricket
Lovers.

"Over!"
That was your
Catchphrase.

Now it is.

E.J. Thribb (17½ not out)



"Gosh, what a lot of Valentine's cards you've got, Narcissus"

TONY BLAIR SPELLS OUT FAST-TRACK VISION

by Our Classroom Staff **Harriet Harmony**

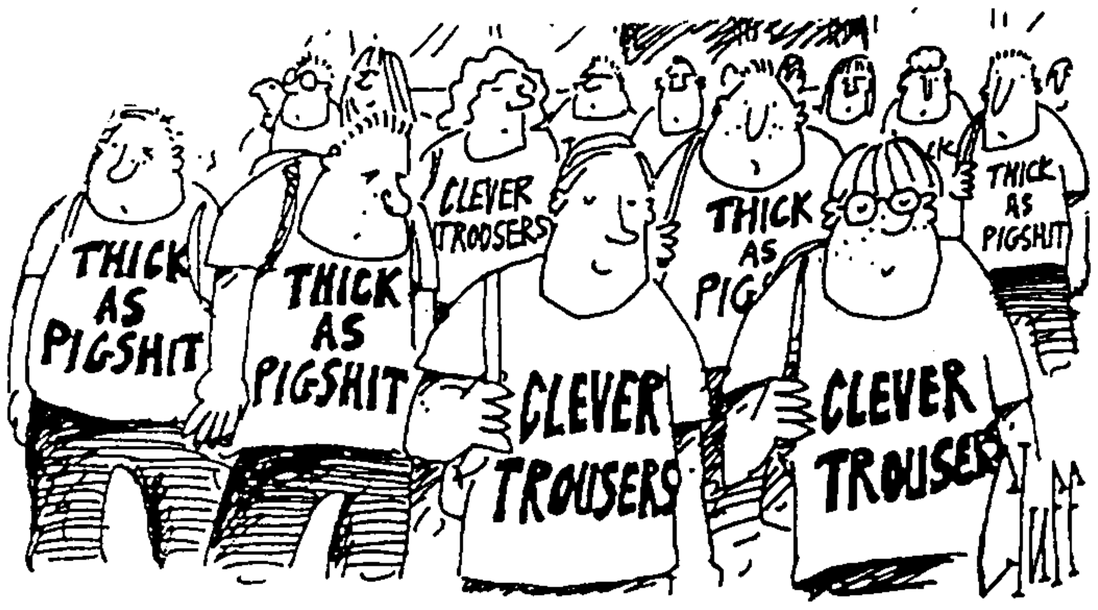
LABOUR education spokesman Mr Tony Blair today outlined his plans for regenerating the country with a bold new plan for clever young people.

Talking to the party faithful in Southwark Cathedral he announced: "If you have an extremely bright and able child, like my parents did, it is very obvious that such a child should be given different treatment from everyone else." He continued: "I propose that I should be selected to join the fast track to Downing Street. It would be unfair for me as a very clever and talented boy to be stuck with a load of dimwits like the Labour party, who will drag me down to their level by their inability to learn simple lessons, ie suck up to the middle-classes or else".

He concluded: "I do not want to end up like all those failures who ended up on the scrap heap without a decent job running the country."

When pressed on the details of these reforms, Mr Blair emphasised that "class size" was the key issue.

"The middle class is enormous and I'm going to make sure they vote for me. They all think their children are brilliant, so they are bound to fall for this one."



TV HIGHLIGHTS

'The Borrower'

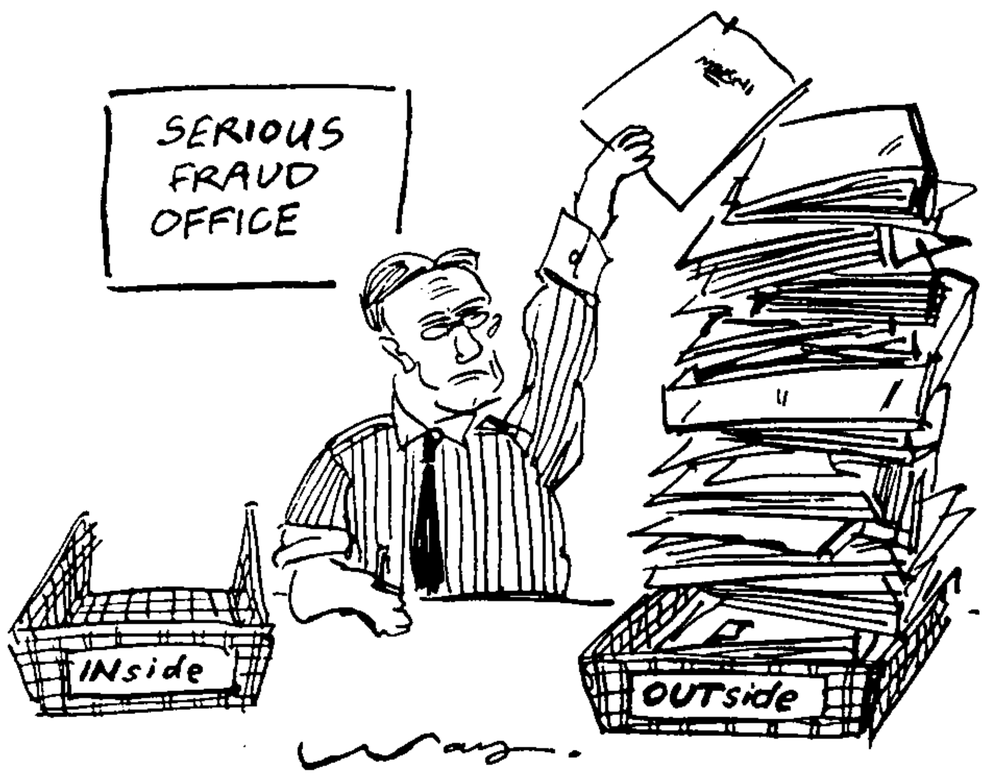
New story for children of all ages

Have you ever wondered what happened to that wallet you lost? Or the small change down the back of the sofa? Or the £100,000 you had saved up for a rainy day?

They've all been borrowed! By the mysterious little woman called the Duchess of York. She lives in the pages of *Hallo!* and only comes out at night to go to parties and live the high-life!

Under the floorboards of her secret lair she has amassed a vast hoard of money — or rather, she would have, except she's spent it all on trips to Bali!

Eye Rating: Utterly charmless



The Sayings of VolBlaire *(1694-1778)*

No. 94

"I approve of what you do but I will defend to the death my right to stop you doing it."

PHILIPGATE

Who Is The Plummy-Voiced Woman On The Mobile Phone?

THE SUN narrows down the hunt to the Top Ten possibles of Philip's posh pal:

1. Lady Amelia Starborgling, 57. Vivacious wife of Sir Reginald Starborgling, Lord Lieutenant of Neasdenshire. She was the Queen's Second Mistress of the Wardrobe in 1957-8.

2. Vivienne Chevrolet, 65. Veteran chanteuse whose name was closely linked with the Duke in the late 1940s. Divorced from bandleader husband Esmaldo (Reg Wheen) and best-known for her hit song Mambo Rambo Cha-Cha-Cha.

3. Dame Barbara Cartland, 110. World's oldest woman, who has known the Duke intimately since he was 3. Her 8,412 best-selling romance novels include Moonlight in Bognor, Bognor in the Moonlight, Under a Bognor Moon, etc. *(See Who's Who pp 94-994.)*

4. The Talking Clock Lady (Mrs Ethel Prunehat, 47). Longtime confidante of the Duke, who is said to be available for the Prince "24 hours a day".

5. Brian Sewell, 85. Plummy-voiced art critic and controversialist who has frequently enraged the establishment by his controversial views, many of which Prince Philip is believed to share.

6. The Queen, 70. Elderly posh woman who has met the Prince occasionally over the past 50 years in London and Scotland. They share an interest in reading the tabloids about their daughters-in-law.

Which Was It? The Sun Plum-Line Gives You The Chance To Decide. Call now on 0810-001-001.

(Calls charged at 107.38p a minute. All proceeds go to Mr Rupert Murdoch)

TOMORROW: We reveal that it was *none* of the above but some dull woman called Lady Romsey.

A Sylvie Krin Special

BROKEN DREAMS

THE STORY SO FAR: Charles and Diana are rebuilding their lives.

Now read on...

"WORRA luvly gal! Girra big 'and everyone!" The familiar voice of the Liverpool-born TV hostess comforted Diana from the screen as she dressed for the Royal staff party. She zipped up her Ferrero Rocher strapless mini gown and admired the svelte image she saw reflected in the Conrad Black full-length mirror.

"And I'm a luvly gal too. I really am," she purred to herself — and there were surely plenty of gorgeous Blind Dates waiting behind her screen ready to whisk her away to a mystery destination.

Yes. Hunks like Hugo Witherington-Crombey whom she had shared coffee with after a work-out at the Harbour Club; and Dr Omar Sharif, the glamorous Persian osteopath who had manipulated her lumbar regions with his dextrous dusky digits. Or would it be Number Three — Wally Loadsamoney, the dynamic building entrepreneur from Lewisham?

Diana's self-esteem had seldom reached such heights. And it was all thanks to Susie Wackenbacker, her friend and mentor. After Susie's counselling she was ready to face them all. And they would all be there at this annual Royal event which she used to dread so much. Charles, Sir Alan Fitztightly, even Leggy Jolly-Goodsort, her husband's new appointee.

Instinctively, she reached out for Susie's book, *All Men Are Bastards*, which was never far from her side. It fell open on page one and she read again the words she had underlined in red: "Empathy with suffering... self-control through self-knowledge... strength through respect for other females... all women are victims." And there, most importantly, underlined twice and scored through with yellow highlighter, the phrase "sisterly solidarity". She switched off the television and drove to the Palace...

"HALLO, Diana. How nice to see you. The boys are being absolutely charming, a real credit to you." The friendly tones of Leggy Jolly-Goodsort greeted the Princess as she entered the crowded Roccoforte Suite decorated by the renowned Italian Renaissance master of the mural.

Diana froze and tried to recall Susie's words of advice. "Remember, Honey. Men are the enemy, women are the allies in the great struggle for identity." Diana glared at Leggy.

"You bastard. Next time you sleep with Charles, get yourself a condom. And why not put a paper bag on your head, you fat bitch."

The kindly custodian of Diana's children swooned with shock at the venom of the attack but Diana showed no remorse.

She had whispered the words at the top of her voice so that everyone would hear. Even Charles, she hoped.

But as she looked across the room, willing her estranged husband to witness her hour of triumph, she was irritated to see that he was asleep in a Parker-Bowles armchair by the fire...

"OH, most wise and honourable Prince. A thousand thank-yous for your inestimable charity. Surely you are the Prince of Peace and the Bringer of Harmony."

The bearded Imam of Neasden was just one of a line of hundreds of grateful holymen who had gathered at this, the inauguration of the Grand Millennial shrine, named the King Charles III Temple.

Above them towered minarets and domes, flying buttresses, spires and giant statues of milk-drinking elephants disappearing up into the heavens.

Constructed out of solid gold and decorated with sapphires and rubies, the design of the enormous multi-faith universal worship centre had been Charles's own (with a little technical advice by Sir Quintin Quinlan).

It was bigger than St Peter's in Rome, the Taj Mahal in Agra, and the Great Mosque in Constantinople all rolled into one.

"You see," Charles explained to one saffron-robed figure at his side, "the Millennium is a terrifically important opportunity to reassert the primacy of spiritual rather than material values."

The Dalai Lama nodded, as did the Ayatollah, the Chief Rabbi, the Rev Sun Myung Moon and, some way down the line, His Holiness The Pope.

"And it's not just for worship. I see the Charles III Millennium Temple as a refuge for the victims of our money-obsessed culture. One could come here for reflexology, bread-making, acupuncture, holistic macrame, I Ching, Magic Runes or just painting watercolours."

As the religious leaders broke into spontaneous applause, Charles quoted from the work of his old friend and mentor, Sir Louis van der Armstrong, "I see trees of green, skies of blue... Lah-di-da-thingy er... and I say to myself, It's a wonderful world...."

Charles warmed to his theme. "And there can be therapeutic sessions here too. So many people need help nowadays, especially women who sort of go completely mad and there's one woman I'm thinking of in particular who's got into her head that I'm having an affair with Ms Leggy Jolly-Goodsort, which I'm not. I'm having an affair with Camilla, as I told the nation, and this poor woman's always screaming and shouting. Even now... listen... listen... listen..."

"WAKE up, you bastard!" Charles opened his eyes to find the vision of the great temple had faded, to be replaced by the figure of a woman with blonde hair and staring eyes. She was shouting furiously at him and above her voice he could hear the sound of Ms Jolly-Goodsort sobbing on the phone to a Mr Carter Ruck. "So you think I should sue... Yes, I'll send a cheque right away... £5,000 on deposit..." In the midst of the cacophony, Charles reflected sadly that perhaps it was not, as Sir Louis had observed, such a wonderful world after all.

The Daily Telegraph

Est. 1855

Why We Are Not Going To Name The Woman Everyone Else Has Already Named

OUR readers may by now be familiar with the tragic story which has in recent days been widely reported concerning a certain Conservative politician who has, quite rightly in our view, managed to stop this mad, screaming, hysterical woman going on television and embarrassing him by talking about their illegitimate love child.

There are other less scrupulous newspapers than the Daily Telegraph which have chosen to defy the courts of the country by identifying this lunatic woman. The fact that every other newspaper may, in the desperate search for circulation, have chosen to name this poor, sad, deluded female does not, in our opinion, morally entitle the Daily Telegraph so to do. We shall, therefore, not be naming Ms Sara Keays, no matter how ridiculous this may make us look in the eyes of many of our readers.

Bush telegraph

POOR OLD Parkie! Our sympathies go out to Lord Parkinson as he tries, quite rightly, to silence some woman and her ill-begotten child who are trying to make the life of this great man a misery. Perhaps Lord P. should take a leaf out of the book of that other great and much-maligned politician of our time, the late Sir Jeremy Thorpe. When he had a little bit of bother he had the wisdom to hire a hit man. Would this be going too far?

Exclusive to the Daily Telegraph

Why Boys Who Go To Eton Are Cleverer Than Everybody Else

by Charles Moore,
Editor of the Daily Telegraph

ETON was founded in 876 by Ethelred the Incredibly Clever. Since that time it has maintained its reputation for producing all the really clever people in Britain's history. Old boys include Einstein, Sir Isaac Newton, Pitt the Younger and myself. Eton's secret is simple. You have to be very rich to go there *(cont. £994-a-day)*.

Why I Go To The Opera Even Though I Don't Know Anything About Music

THE suggestion has been put forward by a lot of very silly people that opera is an elitist activity which only the rich can afford. This is utter nonsense. I myself was at Covent Garden only last week and I only paid £752 for my seat.

When we consider how much it costs to fly to Toronto to find a new husband *(surely 'buy a new dress'? CM)* we realise that buying a seat at the opera is a bargain.

Barbara Amiel

Wife of the proprietor of the Daily Telegraph

Has civilisation ever produced anything finer than the chance to sit in a box at the ROH, sipping champagne and watching a performance of Verdi's immortal Swan Lake sung by Placido Pavarottiand conducted by the legendary Bernard Levin, waiting eagerly for the interval and the chance to mingle in the crush bar with lots of other rich people who don't like opera either?

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Pooterbore

The

SEEN lunching at the Garrick yesterday, none other than Simon Heffer and Frank Johnson. I don't know what plot they were hatching, but I am sure all our readers outside London would be fascinated to know the answer!

Diary

I SEE Edwina Currie has written another of her legendary novels about life in the House of Commons. Wags are predicting that it will be very spicy!

Full

WHAT do I see on the menu at the Garrick Club when I am lunching with my old friend Perry Worsthorne but "Spicy Chicken Curry"? Perry waggishly asks "Is this an advertisement for Edwina's new novel?" Just a thought.

Of

OUR readers outside London will be fascinated to know that under the rules of the Garrick Club Miss Cristina Odone, the feisty young 37-year-old editress of the spicy new Catholic Herald, is not allowed to be a member. Her friend Paul Johnson will no doubt be having something pretty outspoken to say on this subject in one of his many columns!

Nobodies

SENT in by a reader from London W1 — a hilarious misprint in the menu of the Garrick Club: "Today's Special: Bron Windsor Soup". Is this by any chance a coded reference to the well-known Telegraph columnist Auberon Waugh?

David Rennie-For Instant-Indigestion

Village Idiot

Semi-Rural Idiot

Suburban Idiot

Urban Idiot

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS MAN?

An artist's impression of 'Knack'

We are very anxious to trace this man in connection with a very serious incident of rape which took place in Cambridge.

The man in question was seen near the scene of the crime shortly before the incident took place.

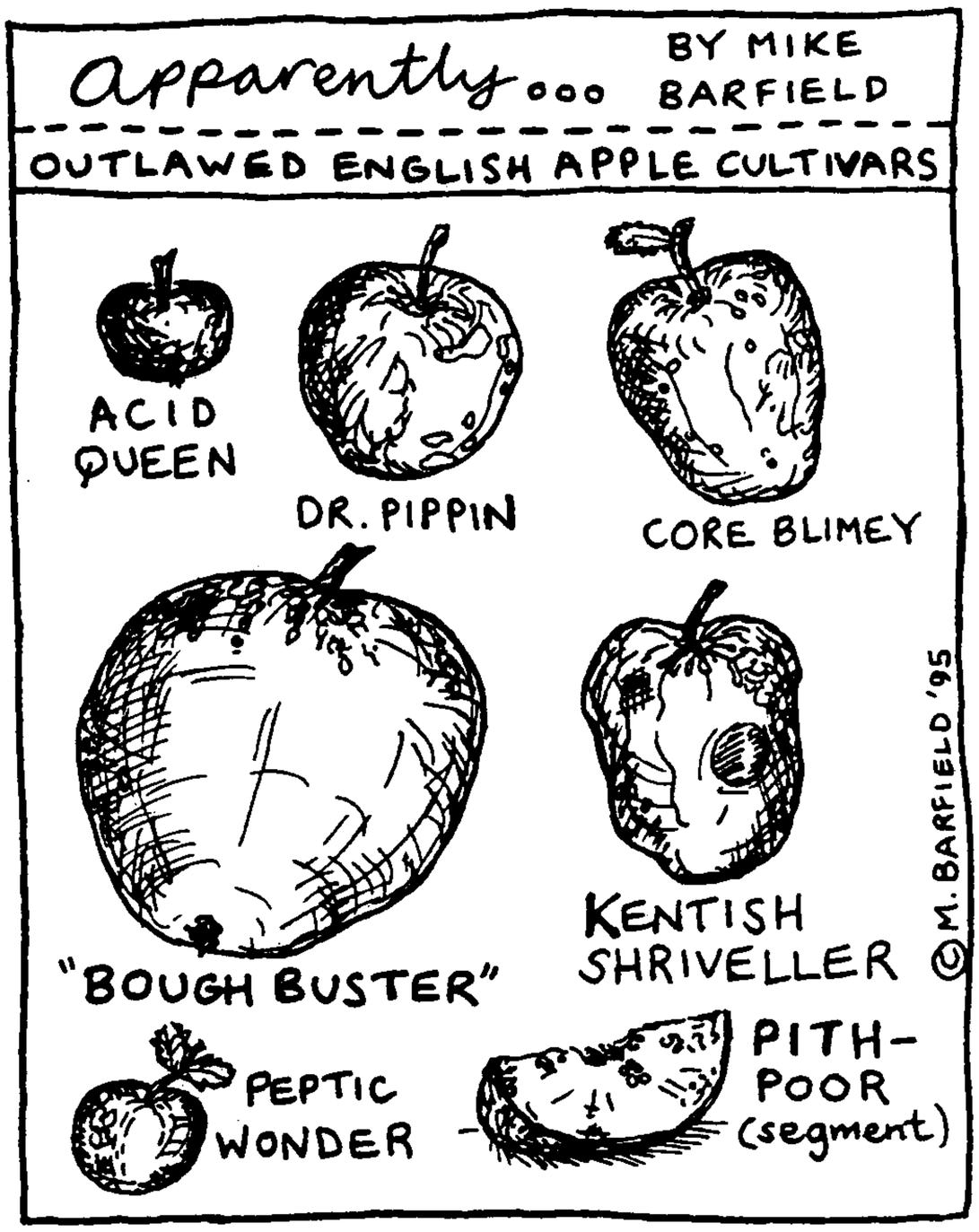
He was seen by several eye-witnesses sitting in a motor vehicle outside the rape victim's house for several hours.

The car had a number of unusual distinguishing features. It was white, equipped with blue flashing lights, and bore the word 'Police' written on the side doors.

The man we are looking for was observed to be asleep in suspicious circumstances during the period when the crime is believed to have taken place.

He is known only as "Inspector Knacker" (or "Knack" for short), of the Cambridge Police Rape Victims Vigilance and Protection Unit.

If members of the criminal fraternity spot this very dangerous individual, they are advised to "have a go", because they know they will get away with it.



The Tale Of Miss Tiggywinkle-Burke

by Princess Beatrix Potter

ONCE upon a time there was a little furry creature who spent all her day washing, cleaning, ironing and making everything spick and span for her two little friends, Willy and Harry.

She laid out their pocket kerchiefs. She put a crease in their little weskits. And she gave them each a big, shiny apple to eat on the bus on the way back to Eton.

Their father was so pleased with Miss Tiggy that he gave her a shiny sixpence with his Mummy's head on it, and a chaste peck on the cheek.

But one day Miss Tiggy was just ironing her two little friends' top hats when "Rat-tat-tat-tat!" came a loud knocking at the door.

Miss Tiggy smoothed down her pinnie and went to see who it was. When she opened the door, there was no one there.

Miss Tiggy went out into the road and looked both hither and yon. Imagine her surprise when suddenly, roaring towards her, came a BMW convertible with the number plate HRH D1, driven by a big blonde woman in lycra shorts and dark glasses.

Within seconds, the car was gone — leaving behind on the road one very flat very squashed hedgehog. Poor Miss Tiggywinkle was no more.

LATE NEWS

'WE ARE ENTIRELY SATISFIED WITH OURSELVES' SAY RAPE POLICE

by Our Rape Staff
John Stalker

CAMBRIDGE police last night rejected charges that they had in any way failed in their duty to guard rape victim Ms X.

"We are very comfortable with the idea that we acquitted ourselves extremely well with regard to this one," said Inspector Dolittle.

"We provided her with first-rate protection, apart from the very short period of four hours when this lady was attacked.

"This represents a 95 percent success rate, which we are entirely happy with."

Ms X's state of happiness was last night said to be 0 percent.

OLYMPIC RESULTS

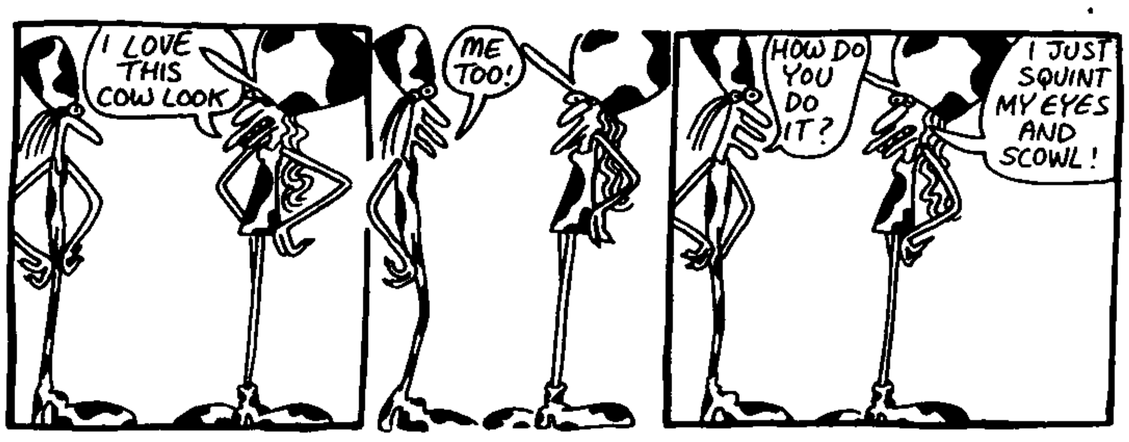
New Record Set By Bland

Olympic Money Throwing

1. C. Bland (BBC)	**£961m**
2. R. Murdoch (Sky)	**£2.8bn**
3. K. McKenzie (Topless Darts)	**35p** *(disqualified)*

SUPERMODELS

KERBER



DIARY

UNKIND folk — the sort who are jealous of my femininity and sheer drive — sometimes accuse me of always bringing sex into every sentence. But can I be blamed for the fact that Big Ben is shaped like a penis? And frankly can I help it if the red box traditionally carried by Government Ministers is so strongly reminiscent of a very very big condom-carrier? To put it with my characteristic bluntness: can I heck as like!

This is not to deny my sexuality, far from it. But underneath all the lovely, lovely sex in my new novel — and there's nothing wrong with sex, take it from *me* — there is a very very serious theme, lurking like deliciously saucy scarlet lingerie at the bottom of a lady MP's Gucci handbag. The novel's meant to expose the decline of Parliament, the way it's been cheapened in recent years by ambitious people using it as a springboard for their own self-advancement. You may have noticed Edwina Currie MP — that's me, folks! — has been attracting one helluva lot of publicity for this sexy new best-seller, so it looks as if the message is getting across — and that *must* be a good thing for society.

As I say, the book's a champion way of getting some very important political messages across in a dignified yet enthralling fashion. Get a hold of this passage, for instance, where my heroine, the beautiful, idealistic and brilliant Edina Corrie MP is enjoying a liaison with a male Member (and how!):

She grasped his haunches tight, as if frantically searching for her most recent speech in yesterday's HANSARD. And with that she pulled her into him, making her rear up higher and higher, like a deeply concerned MP trying to catch the Speaker's eye in order to make a major contribution in an important Parliamentary exchange.

"I think it would be wonderful if you would take the rest of those pretty undergarments off and roll over onto your front," he said, realistically. He then reached over to the British-made stove beside the bed and withdrew the omelette he had prepared earlier from the warming-drawer. Yes, he knew what a lady loved. With a deft hand borne of years of practice, he began to smear the perfect omelette all over her luscious nipples, which were now as hardened as an old Labour backbencher after seventeen long — but deserved — years in Opposition.

"Oh, Edina," he sighed as he moulded the omelette into her every straight-talking Northern crevice, "You are the bravest, most outspoken politician of your generation, as well has having a remarkable flair for personal publicity."

His faultless summary of her political career

EDWINA CURRIE MP

became ever more urgent as, with his strong, masculine hands, he encouraged the omelette to seep its sensual way into her every pore. "If ever they try to oust you, Edina" he panted, "It will be because you have stuck your neck out on a matter of grave national and international importance, but the ordinary people of this great country of ours will never forget what you have done for them — not ever!"

Edina had never felt this close to anyone. She quivered as his tongue licked her all over, lapping up that omelette like no omelette had ever been lapped off her before, with all the frantic yet careful thrust of a last-minute voter on Election Day, until at last a great cry came from her. "We do warn you," she gasped, "that most of the omelettes in this country, sadly, are now infected with salmonella!"

The Honourable Member reared up and rushed with all the manly vigour he could muster headlong to the toilet-bowl. "I may be too feminine for some people," thought Edina, purring contentedly, "But thank god I'm always right."

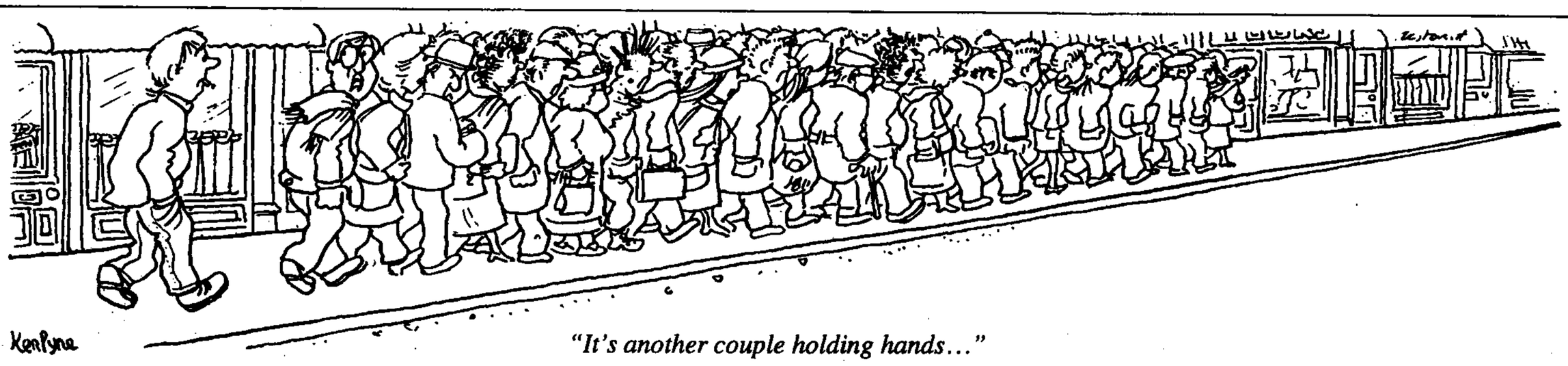
But enough of me. Some politicians I know are always at risk of talking too much about themselves. So let's get down to the important issue of you, the public, and exactly what you think of my long list of achievements. Can I jog your memory?

— August, '88. I attract valuable publicity by dressing up as a snowman and advising ordinary normal decent British folk not to wear too many woollies in the boiling hot sunshine in case they get too hot. Result? All over Britain, people wear lightweight summer clothes, thus preventing fatal dehydration and suffocation on an unprecedented scale.

— December, '88. As Health Minister I am the first politician to stick her neck out and warn ordinary normal decent British folk about the impending catastrophe facing our country in regard to crisp packets. "I have to tell you that one helluva lot of ordinary normal decent British folk face death this Christmas from eating not only the crisps but also the packets that contain them," I warn. "Swallowed in one, these packets can make consumers choke to death, particularly the elderly. With this in mind, I intend to launch a £2 Government initiative to educate the public in the correct way to approach crisp eating, with allied demonstration days and training courses." I attract a further £20 million worth of publicity for the scheme by posing with Mr Blobby in a bra and suspenders, feeding crisps in the correct fashion to TV/AM's dishy young Nick Owen. Inevitably, there is a predictable cry of "scaremongerer" from jealous colleagues, but I have to tell you that the following year not a single person dies from choking on a crisp packet. Sometimes it pays to stick your neck out, you know.

— January, '89. I attract £3 million worth of valuable publicity for the Government by advising the ill to get well soon or face the consequences. "It's a well known fact," I tell them, "that if all patients removed their bandages, hospital administrators could use them for much needed window insulation, thus saving millions of pounds in heating bills! To drive this message home, I dress up in bandages and remove them in a light-hearted "strip" routine for hunky presenter Eamonn Holmes on BBC/TV's important "Pebble Mill At One".

Items In My Handbag: five copies of my new, sexy blockbuster, ready-signed for emergencies; prawn cocktail sauce and a body-brush (— for when I get home!); handbound selection of wicked Edwina Currie cartoons from all the national newspapers and many international ones — just to keep my head from becoming too big!; letter on Downing Street notepaper complimenting me on my "short time on the front bench" and wishing me "a long and restful period on the back-benches" signed "Margaret Thatcher" and dated December 18th 1988; three pages of (characteristically forthright!) tips to Sir Patrick Mayhew to assist him in the Northern Ireland peace process; full range of cosmetics, plus Disco Babe scent — a great favourite of male constituents on my factory visits!; plot outline for next Edina Corrie novel — Edina becomes PM, saves nation from itself; memos to the Governor of the Bank of England, Boris Yeltsin, The Pope, etc, on topics of national and international importance. Busy lady, eh?



"It's another couple holding hands..."

Literary Review

Penguin goes, er, cheap-cheap

Penguin 60s, Penguin 60s Classics, and Phoenix paperbacks which look much the same and also happen to cost 60p.

BUGGER the NBA: the most intriguing thing to have happened to the books business over the last 12 months is the arrival of these doll's house sized booklets, retailing for less than a magazine.

Nobody seems to have realized what their success means. They began almost by chance when a Penguin executive saw such books being sold in Europe and thought the format worth nicking. So, to mark Penguin's 60th anniversary last July, 60 Penguin titles were published at 60p each. They immediately became popular, to such an extent that they had to be removed from the regular bestseller lists and given an annexe of their own.

Penguin was initially bemused by the response but has now launched another line of miniature Penguin 60s Classics, got up in the familiar black livery and offering a representative selection of their main list — from Aristophanes, Augustine and Austen to Wharton, Whitman and Wilde. Another publisher, Orion, has ripped off the idea in turn and recently put out a list of "Phoenix" 60s.

So now the bookshops are stuffed with stacks of things that look like beermats. At this price they don't generate much direct revenue for the publishers or booksellers. But, the theory goes, they increase the "footfall" in the shops and moreover act as salesman's samples for full-length books — samples for which the customer has been induced to pay, moreover.

The reality is sadly different. So far from representing some kind of renaissance of the common reader, they spell disaster. The confetti-like cascade of these itchy pamphlets is actually one of the more florid symptoms of the current crisis in publishing.

Until last year publishers could fool themselves that books are not particularly price-sensitive. No longer. Now they know many people only want them if they're dirt-cheap disposables.

Penguin got into trouble when Wordsworth Classics reprints came out at £1 a time, compared to the £5 or more that Penguins cost. They've had to match this price and it's cost them. The firm's in deep trouble and has recently sacked many of its staff. Now Penguin 60s have undercut even the £1 mark. What happens if some customers get it into their heads that 60p is about the right price for books? This isn't the start of a bright new era, it's the end of the line.

For the punters the self-delusion involved is even more laughable, for somehow these little brochures have become positively trendy. People who wouldn't be seen dead with a Reader's Digest "condensed classic" proudly flourish their sixties.

The Penguin list is at least well-edited, sticking to the fiction that the books are really no more than tasters, or starter packs, for the real thing. So you get *The First Three Circles of Hell* for Dante; *Lives of Three Renaissance Artists* for Vasari; *Three Sketches from a Hunter's Album* for Turgenev. One or two are genuinely impressive (a bilingual text of Rimbaud's *A Season in Hell*, for example).

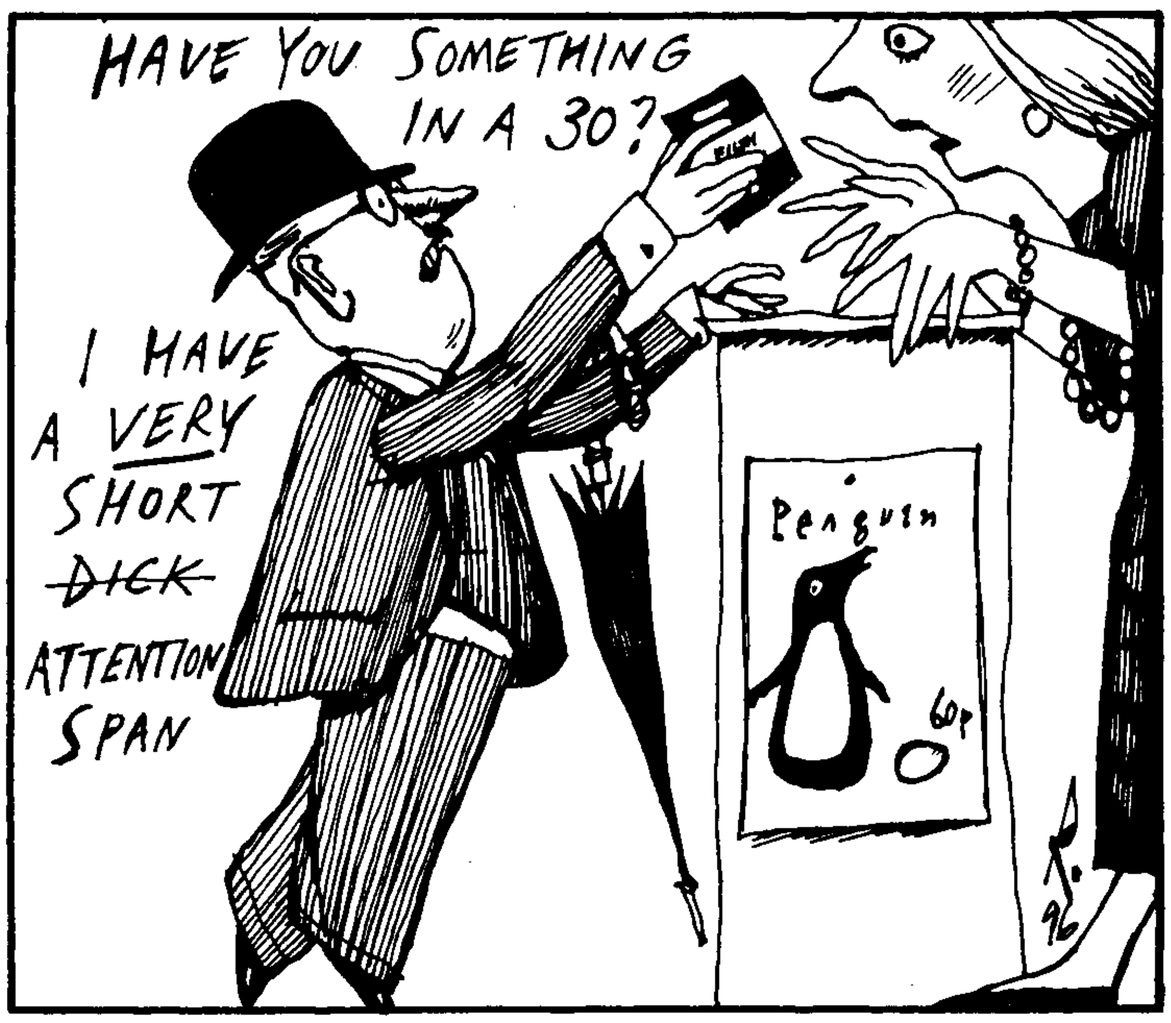
It's taken the much tackier Phoenix list to expose the silliness of the format. They're much worse produced, without introductions and horribly misprinted. A number of them are straightforward smut, illustrated with nipples on the covers for the slow on the uptake. There's a bit of *Fanny Hill* ("Male erotic fantasy or frank expression of a someone's sexual feelings? Judge for yourself!") There's some Catullus, under the helpful title *From Bed to Bed* ("his bawdy and direct lyrics can sometimes shock").

And there are two wee filth-packets from the French sex-maniac Alina Reyes, one for men ("she didn't say a thing, but it felt as if she had a vacuum-cleaner nozzle between her lips"), and one, supposedly, for women ("his cock sprang up, magnificently free and stiff").

Yet even more pathetic than these porno-quickies is the other great line in the Phoenix series: instant philosophies. Here, each reduced to a length that could be accommodated on a large cereal packet, are the big thinkers: *A Guide to Happiness* by Epicurus; *Natural Selection* by Darwin; and *The Rights of Woman* by Mary Wollstonecraft.

Many pundits professed themselves baffled when the Penguin 60 Marcus Aurelius sold so well last year. But it's the perfect equation: the biggest possible ideas in the smallest possible books: little pills of concentrated wisdom that can slip down so painlessly. It's a shame these here thinkers foolishly let themselves run on so in the first place, but here they are now, sweet-sized.

Of course even at this length few of these titles will ever be read. Buying them is just a cheap way of expressing the wish to possess the contents without finding the time to read them. But even so, they show a certain defeated realism about modern attention spans. Like books on tape, sixties are emblems of our inability to read for ourselves any more. Of course in a few years' time, we'll probably wonder how we ever got through such epics.



BOOKS & BOOKMEN

■ DAN FRANKLIN, publisher at Jonathan Cape, shares with former Cape boss Tom Maschler the touching belief that most of the novels on his list are worthy of winning the Booker prize.

He is therefore "outraged" at the decision by Booker, which had realised that the prospect of having to read 140 novels was off-putting to potential judges, to restrict publishers to entering for the prize only two titles, or three if they have an author who has previously been on the shortlist. Even under the old rules, and in a year when he was allowed to submit seven titles, he found the choice so hard he was compelled to pull the names out of a hat.

Other publishers have less idealistic reasons for objecting to Booker's heart-breaking new policy. Most of them are capable, without resorting to a hat, of deciding which of their books are the best but they are terrified that the authors and agents of titles that have not been entered will learn about their rejection. Far better that the judges, who can later be described as "wankers" (© Anthony Cheetham), make the choice.

☐ WHY on earth did Penguin get rid of Fanny Blake, its popular and successful editorial director? The answer is that she was the victim of a cock-up caused by the congenital inability of publishing director Tony Lacey to keep his mouth shut.

Shortly before Christmas Penguin boss Peter Carson told Lacey that perhaps they should reconsider Fanny Blake's position in a year or so.

A few days later Blake was rung by one of her authors, Margaret Forster. "What's all this about Penguin sacking you?" Forster demanded indignantly. Blake was understandably surprised. But Forster insisted it must be true: she had heard it from her husband, Hunter Davies, who had heard it on the terraces at Tottenham Hotspur from football hack Eamonn Dunphy — who in turn had heard it from none other than Tony Lacey.

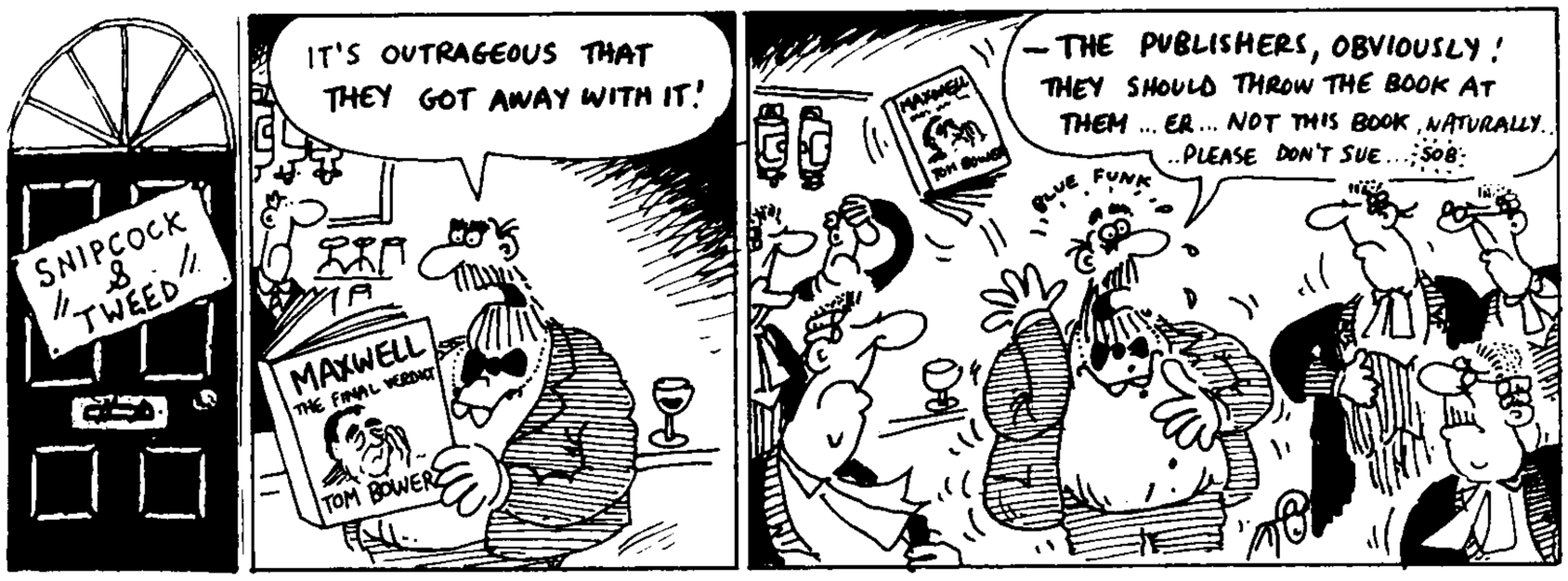
Blake hastened to ask Lacey, whom she had supposed to be her friend, what on earth he was up to. Since he could hardly say "oh, we were thinking of firing you but we didn't really mean it", she was duly sacked forthwith.

■ YOU may have thought there were innumerable "major" prizes for women's fiction, but you'd be wrong.

The Orange Prize for Fiction, announced last week, is the same as the Mitsubishi one which an article in the *Times* by Simon Jenkins killed off a year or two back.

Last year's Booker was won by a woman, Pat Barker, and this year's Whitbread has just been won by a woman, Kate Atkinson. Nice that they now have their own prize as well.

'Bookworm'


SNIPCOCK & TWEED
IT'S OUTRAGEOUS THAT THEY GOT AWAY WITH IT!
MAXWELL
THE FINAL VERDICT
TOM BOWER
—THE PUBLISHERS, OBVIOUSLY! THEY SHOULD THROW THE BOOK AT THEM ... ER ... NOT THIS BOOK, NATURALLY.. ..PLEASE DON'T SUE... SOB
BLUE FUNK

footnotes

Bad day at Blakenhurst

STUDY carefully the following home office statement, issued on 9 December in response to inquiries about Alton Manning, a 33-year-old black man from Birmingham.

"Following an assault on a custody officer, Mr Manning was being moved from one part of a prison to another when he became unwell.

"Medical assistance was called. He was pronounced dead at 21.21 hours."

Now consider the following facts:

1] Alton Manning's body was surreptitiously photographed by his family soon after his death. The photograph makes him look as if he had been through a 15-round boxing match.

2] Two post mortem examinations have been carried out. The first, by a home office pathologist, said the cause of death was "respiratory impairment and restriction during restraint". The second, by Dr Ian Hill, confirmed: "The appearance is definitely that of an asphyxial death. In my opinion death was due to the way he was handled." Dr Hill said he was concerned by the similarities with the case of Joy Gardner, who died while a police snatch squad tried to deport her.

3] Ever since 1992, when Alton Manning had an altercation with a former girlfriend who was related to Birmingham police officers, he had complained of continual harassment by police and prison officers. Since he was remanded in prison last August, he had kept up a barrage of complaints.

4] His mother visited him two hours before he died. He told her he would soon be dead.

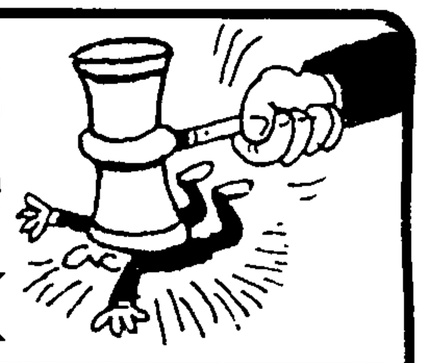
5] The prison where he died, Blakenhurst, is new, privatised and run by an American company renowned for its "harsh regime".

6] Inmates of Blakenhurst have written to Alton Manning's solicitor to say they saw him surrounded by seven prison officers shortly before he died.

Do you think these facts suggest a rather different picture to the one painted by the home office statement? The home office says there will be no further statement pending an inquiry by a senior governor from another prison and by the police.

The Birmingham Racial Attacks Monitoring Unit, which has been very busy recently, is calling instead for a full public inquiry.

Beaks of the Week



JPs: Judy Hopkins, Ted Curtis and Ann Bogard. Kingston-on-Thames.

■ THE curious case of Charles Peterson shows how poll tax arrears cases can be confused with crime.

Mr Peterson, 49, who was unemployed and on income support, was taken to Kingston magistrates' court on 18 August 1993 by a police officer attached to the court who addressed the bench on Peterson's finances. The officer also made it clear that Mr Peterson was known to the police in connection with other matters.

The magistrates promptly sent him to prison for 90 days. Rotting in Wormwood Scrubs, Peterson rang the High Court, who referred him to Richard Wise of Stoke. Wise often represents people arbitrarily imprisoned for debt, and after five weeks in prison Mr Peterson was eventually released by order of a high court judge.

The case came up for judicial review this month. The magistrates conceded they had acted unlawfully and the prison sentence was quashed.

Bowe strings

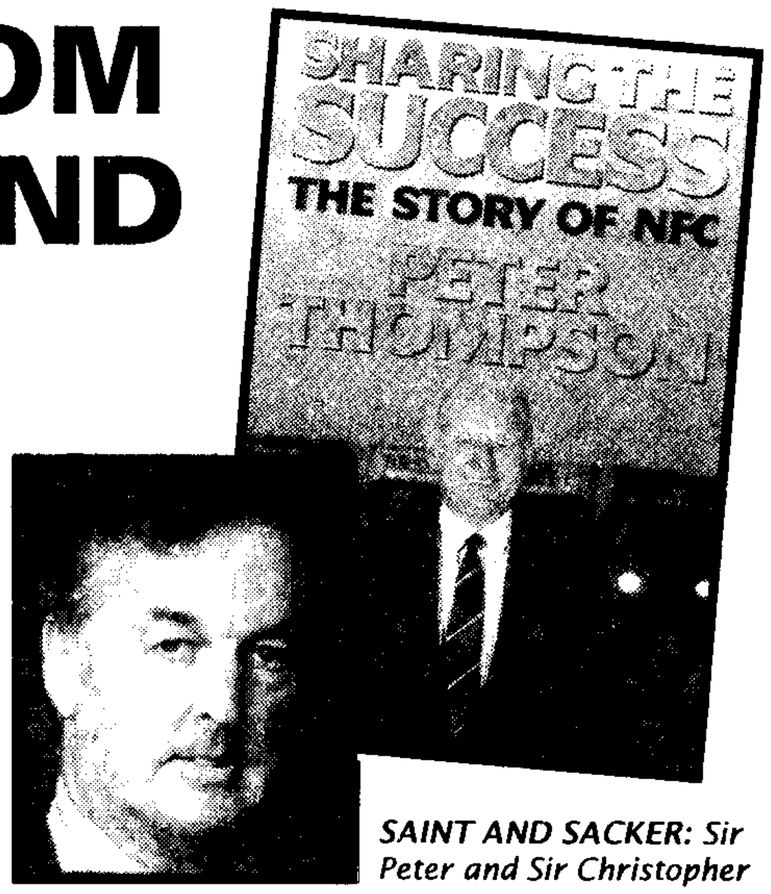
■ STAFF at the Personal Investment Authority, which regulates other people's pensions, enjoy one of the most generous pension schemes in the country. Staff don't have to contribute a penny to the scheme which is based on final salary — the highest possible level. Chief Executive Collette Bowe gets her contributions of £34,875 paid entirely by the Authority. Other directors aren't covered by the scheme, but their "emoluments" went up from £519,000 in 1994 to £702,000 last year: a rise of 35 per cent, slightly higher than inflation.

THE KINGDOM OF THE BLAND

■ BBC staff who are wondering what life will be like under their new chairman, Sir Christopher Bland, should study the exciting history of NFC plc, once a successful publicly-owned transport company.

When NFC was privatised in 1982 it was hailed as a model of shared ownership and control: 83 per cent of the shares were owned by the workers; a share owned by a worker was worth double a share owned by anyone else; and a generous profit-sharing system enriched the worker-shareholders. Its then chairman, Peter Thompson, was knighted and wrote a stirring book entitled *Sharing The Success*

All this was briskly junked when profits suddenly slumped last year. A new management, led by a new chairman Sir Christopher Bland, was called up. Bland declared that the old idealism about worker-shareholders was "not appropriate". More familiar remedies were adopted. Four executives were paid off with golden handshakes amounting to £2.2 million. Out went the double vote. Out went the profit-sharing scheme. Out went the elaborate "participatory management" structure. The 83 per cent worker-shareholding in 1982 has slumped to 23 per cent, and is still falling. The company is back in the hands of old-fashioned bosses like Bland who can sack people at will. A thousand jobs have gone already — and the new management hopes to double that figure in 1996.



SAINT AND SACKER: Sir Peter and Sir Christopher

WILL POWER

■ SHOULD solicitors inherit from their clients? The *Eye* put this question to Mr Terence Stanton, a solicitor in Bognor Regis who acted for an old lady for many years before she died last September.

In 1984 he drew up the woman's original will which left everything (worth about £80,000) to her niece. In 1986, she changed her will. The new one, drawn up by another Bognor solicitor, left the niece nothing. The new sole beneficiary was Mr Stanton.

Mr Stanton replied: "I do not think it would be appropriate to enter into correspondence with you about the facts of this matter."

He went on: "I think the suggestion that solicitors should never be entitled to inherit from their clients goes rather far. After all, most solicitors act for their parents and other members of their families. Some may act for their wife or husband. Why should we be singled out for special treatment? And once you draw the line to allow in other relatives, who should you exclude — friends or anyone who may have reason to be particularly grateful to their solicitor? You may think it would be just as unfair as a rule that would prevent journalists inheriting anything from anybody about whom they might have written anything, which would almost certainly include their mothers and fathers and other members of their family."

Sheep at the price

■ Live animals exporter Roger Mills is not the most popular man in Brightlingsea, Essex, the port from which he carries out his trade. His announcement that he is "on course" to resume shipments has been greeted with widespread fears of more battles between police and demonstrators.

Mr Mills has had some support from local newspapers, and must have been pleased with the diminutive coverage given to the news that a company in his Live Sheep Traders group run by his wife was wound up in the High Court in November. The main petitioner for the winding up was Ulster Factors Ltd of Belfast. A spokesman for Ulster Factors told the *Eye*: "It's very simple. They bought some sheep from us worth £34,343 and they didn't pay us".

Per Astra ad ardua...

1. CORK UP

IN JUNE 1992, the *Daily Mirror* submitted a series of questions to the ministry of defence (MoD) about its then minister for defence procurement, Jonathan Aitken. The first question was: "Does he confirm that he asked to be a member of the main board of Astra, an arms company?"

The answer came the same day from Christopher Verey, then deputy chief of public relations at the ministry: "Mr Aitken did not ask to be a member of the Astra main board."

In his written evidence to the Commons select committee on trade and industry, submitted last September and now made available to the *Eye*, Mr Aitken wrote that he had originally been offered a paid consultancy with Astra but had turned it down. A few days later, he says, he was told by Sir Kenneth Cork, a director of his bank, that he had "made a wrong judgement"; and that he should "go on the board of Astra as a non-executive director".

Accordingly, Aitken writes, "I reversed my previous stance, and telephoned Gerald James (Astra's chairman) to say that while I would not be interested in a parliamentary consultancy I would be willing to become a non-executive director. After some brief discussion Mr James offered me a non-executive directorship of Astra's principal operating subsidiary BMARC. The remuneration was £10,000 per annum. I accepted..."

2. KOCK UP

A FUNNY thing has happened to the Commons select committee on trade and industry which is looking into British arms exports to embargoed Iran. Suddenly, an old-fashioned cover-up has turned into an investigation.

Until the recent hearing, when the committee listened to the evidence of an old *Eye* favourite, Stephan Adolphus Kock, the drift of the MPs' questions was to ridicule anyone who dared suggest that the former chief secretary to the treasury Jonathan Aitken had done anything wrong when his company BMARC exported guns to Singapore, even if those guns had gone on to Iran.

Now, suddenly, the questions are all hostile. For instance, for three months the committee ignored a document about arms to Cyprus which it was revealed in the *Eye* last October and handed to the committee soon afterwards. The document clearly shows that BMARC used Singapore as a conduit for arms to embargoed countries. Now the "Cyprus document" is being bravely flourished in the hearings. Why the change of heart?

The most likely explanation came in an answer to a written Commons question planted by the amenable Tory MP for Taunton, David Nicholson. It asked if the president of the board of trade had anything to add to previous statements on BMARC. The answer, on 26 January, was sensational. Yes, said the junior DTI minister Philip Oppenheim, there was something to add.

INQUISITIVE: Dr Keith Hampson

After further searches at the DTI another 48 export licence applications from BMARC had miraculously been discovered. Could it be that some influential Tories had been given the gist of the documents — and had decided as a result to hang their colleague J. Aitken out to dry?

Another reason for the sudden shift of mood is the extraordinary performance of Mr Aitken's former fellow-director of BMARC, S.A. Kock.

This is the second time the gun-toting, hard-drinking former arms salesman for the Midland Bank has given evidence to the committee. The first was in 1992 during "Warren's Whitewash" — the select committee under Sir Kenneth Warren which investigated the strange story of the supergun. Kock, who was a consultant-adviser to the "defence equipment finance department" of the Midland Bank, joined a new arms company Astra in 1986. The 1992 committee wanted to know whether, in the light of Mr Kock's curious past in white supremacist Southern Rhodesia from 1944 to 1967, he was a British intelligence agent. Kock replied (on 19 February 1992): "I have never been a member of MI5 or MI6."

That seemed to put an end to irresponsible speculation that British intelligence had played an important role in the covert sale of arms to Iran and Iraq during the embargo. But wait. When Kock had been examined under oath four months earlier (on 10 October 1991) by department of trade inspectors, he told them proudly: "I had the deputy head of MI5 come to see me at 6 St James's Place [Astra's London offices]."

ONCE A SPY ALWAYS A SPY: Stephan Kock

Some MPs have been shown this evidence, so when Kock returned to the select committee on 24 January this year, Tory MP Sir Anthony Grant told him he was under oath and asked: "Have you ever worked for MI5 or MI6?" After a pause, Kock replied: "In my past life, I have worked for the security services" (MI5 and MI6). This dramatic economy with the truth stung the select committee into a series of sceptical and challenging questions which turned Mr Kock's face redder and redder.

PS: The next hearing of the committee, due on 7 February, was to hear witnesses from the security services — in secret.

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In the City

DEPUTY prime minister Michael Heseltine's "gaffe" over squeezing creditors may not be the only unjustified embarrassment he could face in coming months. For the trial of former Inland Revenue investigator Michael Allcock threatens, however unfairly, to create a frisson of pre-election unpleasantness.

The reason is that Heseltine's name appears on a document expected to be presented as prosecution evidence at Allcock's trial, which is due to start in September. The deputy prime minister features among a list of names provided to the Inland Revenue by bankrupt stockbroker Jonathan Bekhor, who was under investigation by Allcock's team at Special Office Two which covered the City.

The handwritten list comprises about 70 individuals, companies and banks. It includes well known City names who Bekhor claimed had been involved in share dealing through his firm. Bekhor and other witnesses are expected to be questioned about the list at Allcock's trial, where the former tax inspector faces charges of corruption relating to the tax affairs of two co-defendants unrelated to share dealing.

Bekhor and his now defunct firm, A.J. Bekhor, never acted for Heseltine and there is no evidence that Bekhor knew or ever met Heseltine. So the deputy prime minister will be justly mystified to find himself on the list.

His name is indirectly bracketed by Bekhor with one-time City highflying dealmaker Nicholas Oppenheim (a distant relative of former minister Sally Oppenheim and Tory MP Philip Oppenheim) of Tranwood fame and to two of Oppenheim's business associates. Yet there is no evidence that Heseltine knew or had any business dealings with any of this trio. Nor is there any evidence that any of the three were engaged in any improper activity.

This no doubt explains why the Inland Revenue, despite Allcock's urging, quite properly decreed that the mere placing by Bekhor of Heseltine's name on the list in no way justified any investigation of the deputy prime minister's tax affairs. All such investigations of ministers or MPs require approval at the highest level in the Revenue. Bekhor's flimsy and tangential allegation was understandably considered insufficient to merit such approval.

Bekhor was also a man in need of a little help. He owed the Revenue £22 million he could not repay and had decamped to California ahead of his baying creditors. In a bid to improve his bargaining position with the Revenue he provided Allcock, during two 1991 interviews in the United States, with information concerning clients, many of them involved with offshore companies.

Certain of those named were later approached by SO2. However, many, no doubt including Oppenheim and friends, were — if contacted — able to satisfy the Revenue that there was no undeclared tax liability. A point that will presumably be made clear if the list is raised at Allcock's trial.

THE impending trial of Elizabeth Forsyth, accused of handling £400,000 of stolen Polly Peck money, is expected to be crucial to the decision by her former boss Asil Nadir on whether to return to Britain.

An acquittal before, during or at the end of the Forsyth trial, due to start on 12 February, could persuade Nadir to take the risk of returning from his Northern Cyprus haven to launch his long threatened actions against the Serious Farce Office and the Polly Peck administrators. Nadir certainly proclaims his confidence that the charges against Forsyth will fail — if the SFO does not drop the case at the last minute.

Nadir's new found optimism on the Forsyth outcome owes much to the Maxwell verdict. There the missing man defence, always feared by prosecutors, worked for Kevin and Ian. With Forsyth the defence will be able to play the same card. No wonder therefore that, post-Maxwell, the SFO views the Forsyth trial as more downside than upside.

While he waits for the opportunity to return and pursue his tormentors, Nadir is making progress in his bid to buy back the Polly Peck farm. Sources in Northern Cyprus suggest Nadir's bonking backer Sidika Atalay is close to a deal to purchase the unfinished Crystal Cove hotel from the administrators for $2 million.

The partners in local company Learned are reported to have sold the former Polly Peck owned Jasmine Court hotel for $8 million to a Turkish group. Learned paid only $7.2 million for the hotel plus another, Palm Beach, and the Uni-Pac business; so a good deal for Asil and a not so good deal for the administrators. Especially as they are still owed at least $1 million and possibly $2 million from the original purchase price which is due to be fully paid this month.

Not that the Jasmine Court sale means Sidika and Asil are cash rich. The proceeds may all be swallowed by tax debts due to the Northern Cyprus government and an original $5 million loan from a Turkish bank.

Nadir, meanwhile, is still talking up a possible purchase of the Polly Peck International "shell" for $20 million to be funded by US investors. His ability to do that deal may also hinge on the outcome of the Forsyth trial and whether he will feel able to take the risk of returning to face not just criminal charges but also the bankruptcy proceedings and the administrators' £400 million judgment.

THE SFO decision to persist with Maxwell II may owe more than a little to its troubled relationship with the City of London police who were hot to trot despite the acquittals in Maxwell I.

The City police have been indicating for some months that they wanted to follow Scotland Yard in pulling their officers out of the SFO. City fraud squad detectives have been effectively seconded to Elm Street, whereas this close association was always resisted by the Met. If the City also moved to an "as and when" relationship — or, even worse, took to mirroring the Yard by sending most cases to the Crown Prosecution Service — the role of the SFO as chief fraudbuster would be damaged.

What remains to be seen is whether Maxwell II will be a sufficient sop to keep the City police onboard. And that may also depend on whether Maxwell II survives the expected abuse-of-process challenge which lawyers predict could be a very big mountain for the SFO to climb.

WHAT a surprise! Among the few to jump to the defence of City dinosaur Lord Hanson was his faithful Boswell John Jay. No doubt was expressed by the *Sunset Times* City editor about the benefits of the great one-will-get-you-four demerger in either his own comment column or a flattering, facing full page feature. But then how could there be? Jay has been singing Hanson tunes for years at the *Sunday Times* and before then at the *Sunday Hansongraph*. "Hanson heads our top ten to follow in 1995," he wrote in January last year before moving back to Wapping. Hanson shares were tipped at 230.75p. They are now 197p having fallen almost 15 percent while the stock market has soared 23 percent to a record level!

GRANADA was the victor in the Forte battle because the key City institutions believe Gerry and the Bean Counters will sweat the Forte assets better than the unimpressive Rocco regime. So it is interesting to learn of a tactic which, it is said, Granada may legally adopt to boost its balance sheet.

Just before its financial year end Granada and the three major oil companies that supply its motorway service stations are said to enter into a cosy deal whereby payments totalling several million pounds each are delayed until the following month. The total benefit to Granada's liquidity and borrowings could be more than £10 million, and every little helps. The oil companies are said to be happy to play along with a major customer as they are guaranteed their money plus an extra payment to cover interest and expenses.

If this indeed is Granada policy it would seem little more than an acceptable form of window dressing — unless of course you are Rocco Forte.

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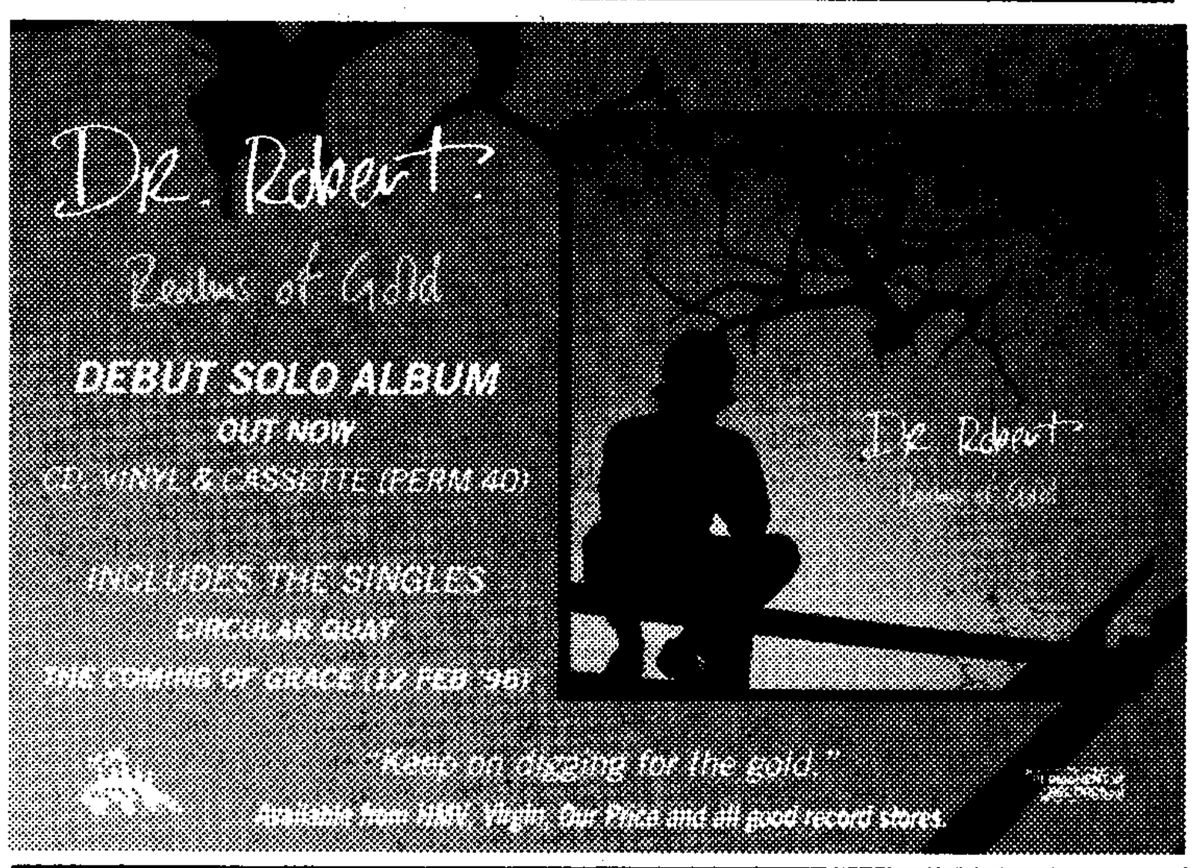
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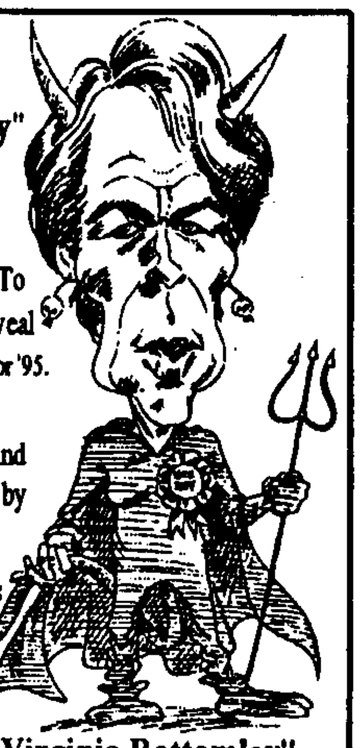

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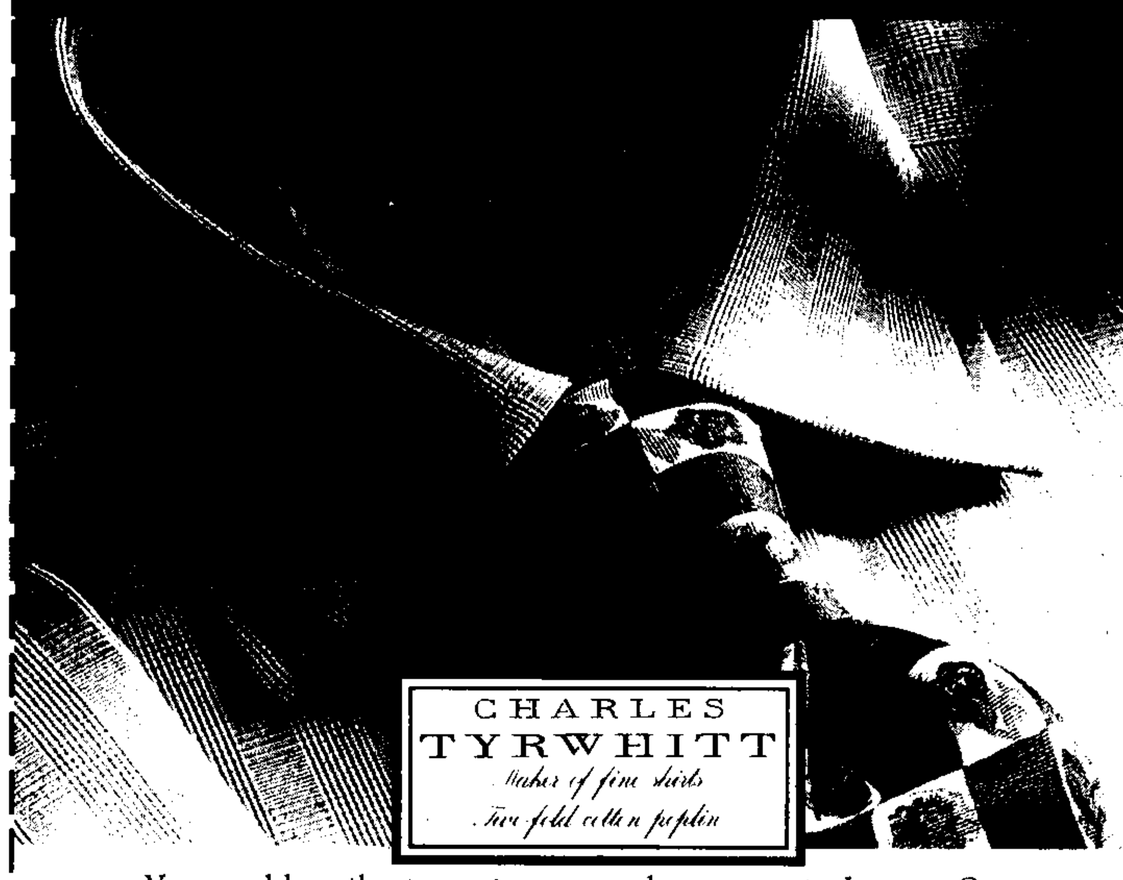

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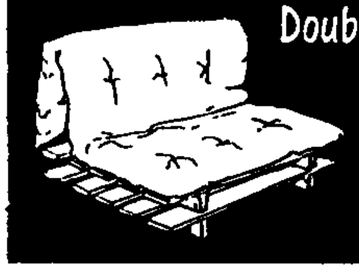

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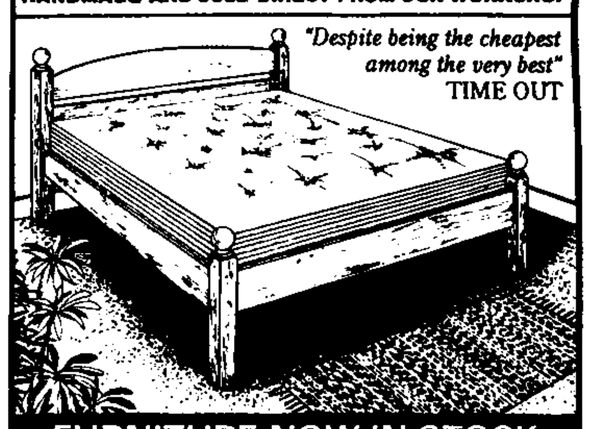

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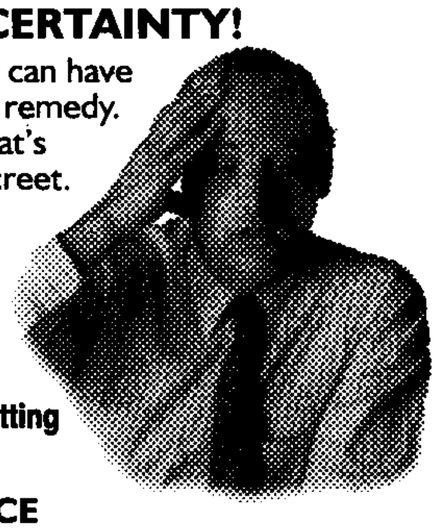

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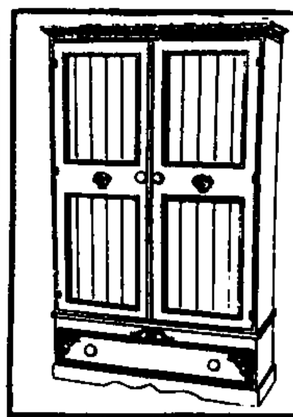

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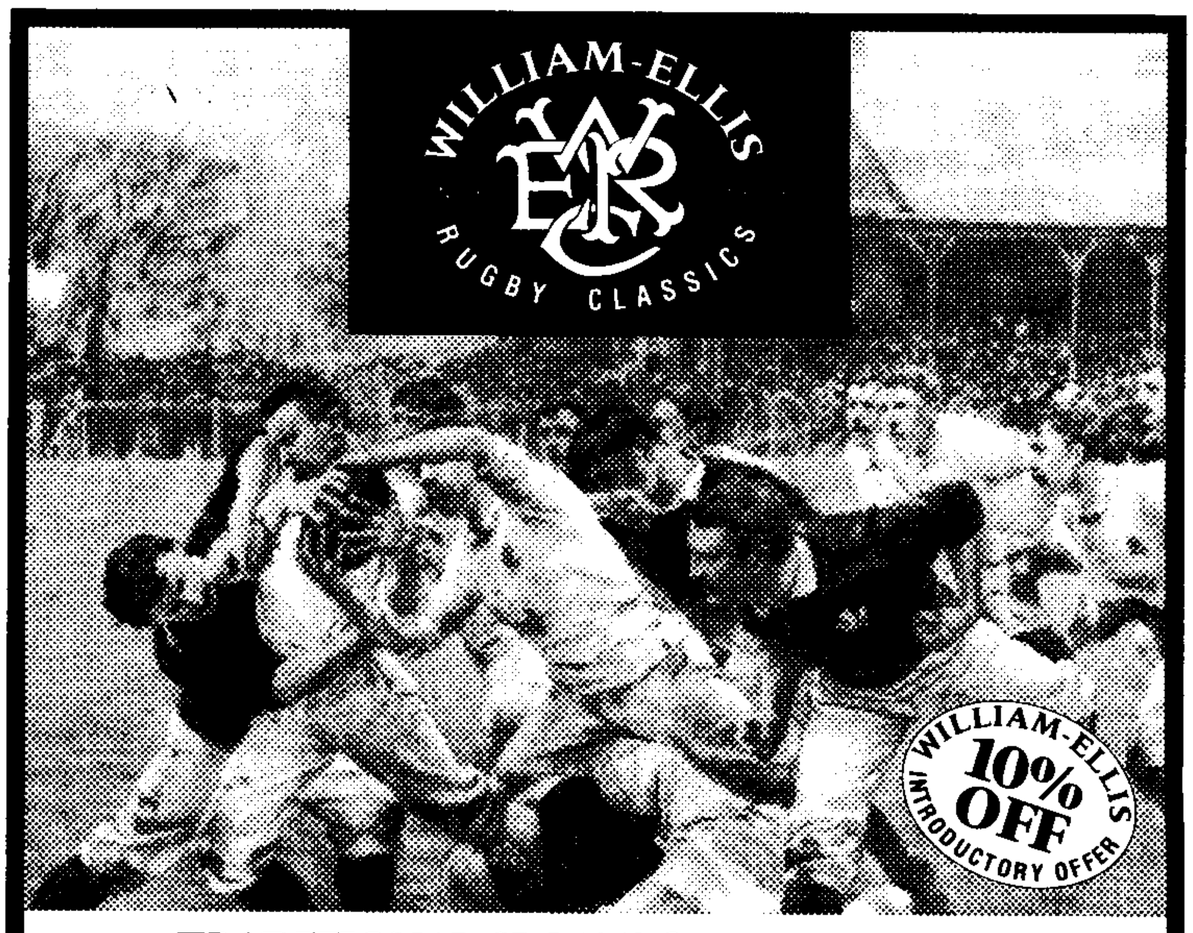

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Deadline for next issue — **Tuesday 13th February**

QUOTE

It came as a surprise to find that sleepy Mid Beds village Lidlington is on the Internet. "Welcome to Lidlington On-Line" proclaims the page, "please surf carefully through our village." Since the page was set up in November, it has been accessed by 57 people — possibly more than have visited the village itself. Recommendations are included for Sharon ("A Cut Above other hairdressers") and free range eggs from Southview Farm.

Bedfordshire on Sunday

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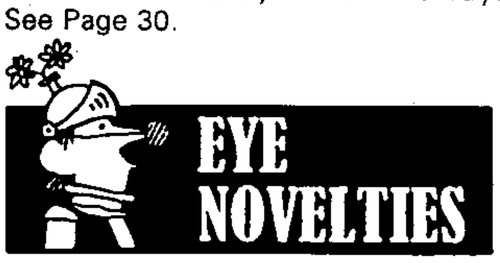
MARK SHERRINGTON — Happy 40th Birthday. Limbering up for Saturday! Sally and Craig.

THE LATE Nicolas Bentley, artist and writer. Tony Rushton at P. Eye would like to get in contact with either Mr Bentley's widow or any extant heir.

SPEECHWRITING by Mitch Murray. See Page 30.



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VIRGINIA BOTTOMLEY becomes "I'm an evil Tory bigot": ANAGRAM GENIUS — see page 27.

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INDIAN LADY, 30, needs financial help/support. Box 3486.

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VERY ILL GULF WAR veteran, 4 children, needs £10,000 to avoid repossession, please help. Box 0491.

DESPERATE ABUSE SURVIVOR seeks funds to rebuild life. Please help. Box 0591.

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DEVOUT CHRISTIAN, in dire straits. Any donation gratefully received. GOD BLESS. Box 1091.

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PERSON TO PERSON — best singles magazine in universe. Free details PLUS Bargain Offer! (Dept PE/6) PO Box 4, Goring-on-Thames, RG8 9DN.

LIVELY, GOODLOOKING bachelor, 1.74m tall, 40 something years young, loves theatre, music, eroticism. Seeks a deep friendship with an interesting, sensual, younger female. Box 4190.

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RUSSIAN LADY, 45, charming biochemist, London based seeks cultured reliable man for serious relationship. Box 4390.

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PASSIONATELY, HUMOROUSLY, sincerely seeking something. Male, 34, needs 30ish, slim(ish) female to help rediscover TLC and life. Box 4590.

LOOKING FOR SOMEONE to change my life. Single professional male, 35, 5'9", n/s, wltm female with gsoh for friendship and possible romance. Box 4690.

DANCES LIKE A cockroach on a hot plate. Crap dress sense but vgsoh, male, 32, wltm female with warped soh, better dress sense, and co-ordination to teach me then laugh with at my pathetic attempts. London. ALA. Box 4790.

FUNNY, FAT, FEMINIST, 40, seeks younger, cuter guy for fun. Photo. London. Box 4890.

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MASSIVE BRUTE pillages to order. No OAPs, slags or airheads. Nice intelligent pieces ok? London & SE. Box 3490.

WITTY, INTELLIGENT lady sought by attractive professional male, 43, to share dinner and conversation. London/Thames Valley. Box 3690.

THINKING MAN'S Crumpet — intellectually challenged gentle man, 46, seeks svelte, erudite, n/s, young lady under 35. SE. Box 3990.

PASSIONATE, PROFESSIONAL upmarket, single male, 39, very inexperienced but hunky and uninhibited, hedonistic, humorous, bohemian, creative, energetic and athletic. Seeks very long-haired busty, non-smoking, unattached lady to teach him lessons in sensual loving. Photo please. Box 0789.

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CHAMPAGNE ROMANCE with university woman (20-33) discreetly sought by solvent, caring gentleman. Midlands/anywhere. Box 5790.

LONDON MEDIAMAN, 40s, inconsequentially successful, wishes to meet clever, creative, sparkling, sensuous, adventurous, woman desiring appreciative male with whom to share reflections, adventures, dreams, winegums, fun, departure lounges, conversations, swimming-pools, coffee, sometimes silence and eventually perhaps, a duvet. Box 2290.

ATTRACTIVE, WEALTHY, gentleman, 49, trim, now single, seeks upmarket diversions with shapely and sophisticated lady with fetish for shiny fashions. Photo please. Box 2390.

MALE, 49, City professional, over 6 feet, slim, fit, non-smoker, attached. Interested in travel, painting, cinema and eating out seeks attached female 35-55 for sincere friendship. Discretion assured. London area. Box 1787.

PLEASANT MALE, attached, 40s, solvent, seeks woman (18-35). Wining, usual wickedness. Photo? Box 0389.

INEXPERIENCED LONDON student (21) seeks older woman for education. Box 5890.

PRE-MENOPAUSAL and married? Try me, 28. My partner is lovely but not my Mrs Robinson. Box 5990.

IN PRAISE OF older women. Slim, boyish, generous man, 36, seeks elegant, sensuous, slim woman, 37-55, under 5'7", for discreet, passionate liaison. Photo please. Box 3489.

PROFESSIONAL MAN, young sixties, seeks randy relationship with lady 40-60. I am Oxbridge educated, successful with very wide interests. You are educated and unconventional. We are uninhibited passionate and discreet. You are married? So am I! Preferably London, but anywhere nearby. Box 4189.

BORED BEYOND BELIEF — professional male, 24, seeks female to put some sparkle back into his life. London. Box 1790.

CHESHIRE'S MOST eligible bachelor (29) seeks intimate liaisons over a bag of fish and chips with broad-minded non materialistic unattached female. No Tories please. Box 1890.

SLIM, ATTRACTIVE, 35, brunette female, wishes to meet partner: ideal candidate would be tall and handsome, preferably ambitious but with boyish sense of humour, to enjoy the finer things in life with. North/West area. Box 5690.

EXCELLENT COMPANY — independent, vivacious lady — with lovely smile (mid 40s) — invites sensitive, successful, professional gentleman to write (45/55ish). Town/Country pursuits enjoyed. Central London/Cotswolds based. 1996 — new year, new start. Box 4990.

MALE UNCUT DIAMOND, 28, still waiting to shine. Likes rock, science, and wit, seeks woman for sparkling relationship. Box 5090.

SLIM, FIT, attractive and discerning male, 33, seeks slovenly old slapper to enjoy Saturday night curries, and flatulent Sunday mornings between the sheets. Box 5190.

GENUINE, ATTRACTIVE male, 38, sometimes exciting, occasionally charming, great chef, seeks very attractive lady to cook for, and more. Photo, letter. Box 5290.

DIANA HUNTS free tall bright male 40/50s. Box 5390.

UNATTACHED WELL-EDUCATED slim, 6ft, professional man, own teeth, jukebox and large house, seeks sensual woman for caring but uncomplicated fun times. SW London/Surrey. Box 5490.

PRIVATE EYE VALENTINE MESSAGES ❤ 1996

❤ FIONA — Will you marry me? PETER.

❤ TO MY LITTLE GAMBAS in the Bush. Eres estupendo. Yours forever and ever. SARAH.

❤ SHEILA WEBLEY. I love you completely. Yours forever BIG GEORGE.

❤ DEAREST SILKY KNICKERS — my love forever. LUL.

❤ YONI — please can I come in? LINGAM.

❤ STEVE, if you were Italian would you be Roman Tick?

❤ DEAREST, DARLING Branleur, je t'aime, KATIE.

❤ WOOFITY WOOF, Sweetheart, says Doggo.

❤ BABOJIG SNUGUMS Loveums XXXXXXX.

❤ VICKI, I love you — BINGY.

❤ POPPY — I love you peachily. PIPPY.

❤ PORO!! Living together is a beautiful thing — we can organise a good time in a marvellous way!! Nasu loves Poro!!!

❤ POG, POG, POGGLE, POG, POG.

❤ WEIRDO, I love you a VEL-KPJ.

❤ MUMMY, Jorvik says you've got a lovely arse.

❤ REMEMBER whose object you are and whose object you will remain, today and always — "The Director". "The almighty Lord hath struck him and delivered him into the hands of a woman" — VENUS IN FURS/THE VULGATE.

❤ PETE THE MEAT loves Jenny's plaice and everything else — TRUE.

❤ GAZELLE, you are loved and wanted beyond compare, BEAR.

❤ METSY — Tangoonenseajay await your call in DXB, T373107/446310, F358849/815227.

❤ RICH MILLER seeks RMNH to be his valentine. JOANNE heh heh heh! luv and wants Rover xxx Woof.

❤ KATE'S DEAD but Peter still loves her.

❤ PHIL, thanks for one continuous adventure. Happy Valentine's Day, ALI.

❤ FERAL PUSSY — I still love you — the WOMBAT.

❤ GEORGIE — Love as always from your never-never man.

❤ MEINES KLEINES FLAUSHIGES RÖPE, my little Miss Cosy, Deine kleine Genetiker.

❤ FIONIK — one year later, 37's a real junction.

❤ STEPHEN — pog aon oidhche earraich. Yours always — CONSTANCE.

❤ EVE-THÉRÈSE, what did I do to be sent an angel to help me? When I am hurt, you console, when confused, you light the way. You are everything. I love you. ROBERT A.

❤ JAMES — I won't let go. My other half.

❤ TINKERBELL — Guess what? I DO believe you. You are such a naughty little Tinkerbell. I love you, I want you, I need you - EXSOG.

❤ BUGGERLUGS — All my love now and forever. STINKFOOT.

❤ GET WELL SOON, OLLI, cos Schnuck loves and needs you.

❤ THIRTY YEARS OF Eye and Thou! Shome mishtake surely. D.G. ALE.

❤ BIG L — the sexiest skipper in the solent, with the fastest planing bottom in the South or is that just make-believe? xxx from your CELTIC CREW-GIRL.

❤ VERENA DIE QUELLE — will you be my Angelmountain valentine?

❤ JULES, I ADORE YOU, be my Girly Pigs Pipple.

❤ POOCHIE: I love you because you are so coochie! — WOOCHIE.

❤ CB, Roxy, Puskas, Baggio, Barmby and me are full of moon madness for you! A.c.h.

❤ CELEB SAYS — S. Nice to see you in the M -ings looking so well. Happy Days.

❤ GOOSE — the opposite to the marzipan in the chocolate selection.

❤ POOCHIE — always want you. COOCHIE.

❤ GIPSY LADY predicts powerful magic for wild rover.

❤ SPUD — I — Blankety Blank? Oh my Donald, you bet! — TEABOY.

❤ CAPITAINE — I'm still in love with you — SOUS-FIFRE.

❤ PARKY CNAP how about doing it doggy doggy? (Who said romance was dead?) Signed VIKING.

❤ BOOLEE WOOLEE furfy bear lubby you! Clang clang.

❤ RED-HOOVED bovine sex-machine, Furfy's after your FOO FOO.

❤ SMALL PAWS — They offered many dromedaries for you, but I wanted to keep you. Forever, if you like. THE MAN FROM DUMPSVILLE.

❤ STUFF THE PSEUDONYMS — Amanda, I love you. NEIL.

❤ URSA MAJOR LOVES FELIX MINOR, astronomically.

❤ FREE POGGLE when you find this.

❤ LISA VANCE'S OUR favourite Texan.

❤ TO LA SUBLIME. In a world full of plastic, you're a diamond. Much love from LE RIDICULE.

❤ FAT BOY, you are the man of my dreams.

❤ BEANNIE — still ditto — odd ain't it? BAGPUSS.

❤ BBT — I fucking love you. TLG.

❤ AMBLESIDE; Love the bedside manner.

❤ ALISON — I'm with you beautiful — your AUSSIE RAT.

❤ 30365 LLM or N? Frink! Frink! Le chat gris.

❤ THE CHOCOLATE RAT loves you madly. Will you marry him?

❤ BEAUTIFUL GOLDEN RABBIT [MSc]: Please God this is OUR year: thank you endlessly for your love, our cuddles, my reality: love from Teddy Bear ****

❤ MISS MEECE — let's scoot and snuffle together forever. Love, BUDKIN.

❤ ME4U, U4ME 2RI, sensationally, Mermaid.

❤ LAINEY LOVES LOMAX. P.S. Always!

❤ FISHY FROG still crazy about Pink Lady.

❤ MAUREEN — thanks for saying yes in Paris. Love, KEVIN.

❤ BOB — Let's make rumpy-pumpy together — soon. Love THE TART.

❤ PIG — Love you — need you — want you for this week's specials tonight NUKELETTE.

❤ DARLING, YOU KNOW I love you — but the Snooty Fox car park!!!

❤ FRANKLIN — Let's share a fortune cookie that says forever. HOPE.

❤ JULIE, HAPPY ANNIVERSARY — I love you more than ever, MICK.

❤ SHANLEY — Lick your what? LOVE, WIFEY.

❤ CAN'T THINK OF ANYTHING again this year — love from, SHEILA.

❤ I'M STILL SUFFERING from post-marital bliss. XOX.

❤ ROSIE AND ANNIE, Annie and Rosie, who's my top gal? Love in duplicate.

❤ MINTY — You're the best. Love, GR.

❤ BOLLOCKS TO the POLL TAX.

❤ P. YOU CAN KISS my tummy any time. J.

❤ BAMSTER LOVES FIBBLES (so do Mash-Mash and Boo-Boo).

❤ DARLING H — 3 years since the fateful party and I love you more than ever. A.

❤ YOU ARE THE STAR in my firmament. I am your biggest Fan — SM.

❤ JEFF & IVAN — doing my best to get you your own personal football team. B and the LUMP.

❤ I HAVEN'T THE HEART not to send you a Valentine — love from Ticker and the gang.

❤ FROM STOLEN KISSES in Charing Cross to hurried meetings at the Sun in Splendour — I never want this to end.

❤ HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY CHICHI, love Tigger.

❤ ❤ ❤ ❤ ❤ ❤ ❤

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